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LECTURES

ON

POLITICAL ATHEISM

AND

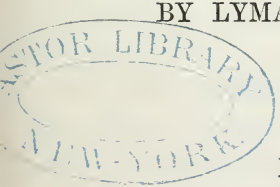
KINDRED SUBJECTS;

TOGETHER WITH

SIX LECTURES ON INTEMPERANCE.

DEDICATED TO THE WORKING MEN OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.



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PREFACE.

The Lectures in this volume, dedicated to the working men of our nation, were commenced in Boston, enlarged in Cincinnati, and revised and fitted for the press in Boston, with such additions as harmonize with and consummate their general design. And having done, all things considered, as well as I could, I commend the volume to my countrymen, without apology, or deprecation of criticism, or plea for candor or mercy. Having exercised my own right in thinking and publication, I cheerfully accord to my readers their right of dissent and criticism; only praying that, in the hand of the Spirit, it may answer the purpose intended, of correcting destructive errors, and extending the illumination of truths essential to salvation.

It is not the object of these Lectures to exhaust the subjects on which they treat, but rather, with conciseness and perspicuity, so to state and defend their elementary principles, in an epitomized form, that they may be understood, rather than lost in the accumulating perplexities of words.

Most sincerely, and with deep interest and many prayers, I have written these Lectures, and now commend them to the providence of God.

I have long been urgently requested by many to prepare my works for the press, with a concise history of my life and times. It has been for many years my desire to do this, and for urgent reasons. I am sensible that the fifty years of my active life have been years of unparalleled interest, and of rapid, terrible and glorious results,—the commencement of the punishment of the antichristian powers, with reference to the predicted victories of the church in the evangelization of the world.

It was in the view of such predictions and providential indications that I early consecrated my powers and time to Christ, with reference to these opening scenes, relying entirely on his promised care of myself and mine; and though these engagements have been imperfectly fulfilled on my part, his promises to me have been most faithfully performed.

As the consequence of these resolutions, I have never laid out far-reaching plans of my own, but awaited and observed the apparent fulfilments of prophecy and the developments of providence.

Of course, from the beginning of my public life, the church of God, and my country and the world as given to Christ, have been the field of my observation, interest, motives, prayers, and efforts. It is this early providential chart of my labors that has extended them beyond the common sphere of mere

pastoral labor; for speedily I found myself harnessed to the chariot of Christ,—whose wheels of fire have rolled onward, high and dreadful to his foes and glorious to his friends,—giving to every demand, as I was able, its portion in due season. And hence, within the sphere above indicated, all my published and unpublished works and labors are comprehended.

In respect to their conception and execution, I may truly say that they are my own; for, though I have not neglected or despised creeds, or the writings of great and good men, I have always commenced my investigations of Christian doctrine, and Christian duties, and Christian experience, with the teachings and implications of the Bible, never expounding it by human creeds, but all creeds and theologians by the Bible, considered as a system of moral government, legal and evangelical, in the hand of a Mediator, administered by his Word and Spirit over a world of rebel, free, and accountable subjects.

I am the more desirous of publishing my doctrinal expositions of the Bible, inasmuch as they have generally obviated the more common misapprehensions and misrepresentations which often attend the exposition of the Calvinistic system; and have been, in the hand of the Spirit, the means of whatever success it has pleased God to give to my labors in revivals of religion; and have extensively united the suffrage, I believe, of evan-

gelical pastors and churches, who supposed themselves more widely to differ from one another. It is this consideration which inspires the hope, that if misunderstood in parts, as sometimes they have been, their comprehensive and relative exhibition may contribute to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I perceive, also, that the comprehensive field over which my vision, and prayers, and efforts, have travelled, has connected me with a large portion of the great events of the government of God: and yet, such a history, seen from a single point of observation, and running through fifty years, may include facts and instructions, as part of the government of God, which might not otherwise be noted on the page of secular or ecclesiastical history; and which, great and significant as they may now appear, will, in coming ages, when their antiquity shall have magnified them, be eminently worthy of preservation, as exhibiting the image and body of the times; and stand forth the testimonials of a glorious progress in all the elements of the political and evangelical civilization of the world,—so great already, that should God in one night blot out the results of the last fifty years, we should think we had opened our eyes upon the desolation that Goths and Vandals had swept over our land and world.

I do, therefore, exult and give thanks to God, that instead of the Gospel having made the experiment of reforming the world and failed, and leaving the

task to a godless, licentious philosophy, the retrospect will show that my labors, with those of the evangelical pastors and churches of my day, have not been in vain in the Lord, but have successfully advanced, and will, with accumulating progress and shock of battle, terminate in the glorious victories of the latter day.

These writings of my life, which may occupy some five or six volumes, will appear chiefly in chronological order, indicating the exigencies which occasioned them, and their adaptation to the providential state of things at the time; and for the same purpose short explanatory notes may attend them.

It is impossible for me to state the specific contents of each volume: I can only say generally, that they will contain my occasional published works, — the theological system which I have preached and taught, — a large selection of the sermons written and delivered amid revivals of religion, and found most efficacious, — lectures on education, and to young men, — with a large amount of miscellaneous, and, I suppose, important and interesting matter, — to conclude with a history of my life and times.

The materials of these volumes, though not yet fitted exactly for the press, are thoroughly digested and well considered, as the result of frequent revisions, and in their order, plan, and definitions and expositions, are such as accord with my best judgment; and may easily and rapidly be fitted for the press, and given to the public.

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LECTURE I.

THE BEING OF A GOD.

History teaches us that in all past time the earth has been owned, and knowledge and power have been monopolized, by the few, while the people, the laboring classes, the great body of mankind, have been left to grope their way in darkness and slavery, tilling the earth they did not own, on the borders of starvation, and liable by a few days' sickness to become paupers. Some, supposing that this unequal condition was fostered by Christianity, have regarded it as the enemy of man. But, instead of this, all history teaches that degradation and oppression have existed in proportion as men have departed from the Bible, and that in the same degree in which men have come under its influence, they come out from darkness and bondage, to intelligence and Christian civilization.

It is now three hundred years since commerce and the arts and sciences have exerted their powerful tendencies to equalize the condition of men, so that the many should not bear the burdens of life for the few. No nation has ever been placed in circumstances so favorable to the consummation of this experiment as ours; and though very much remains to be done, yet there is a wider diffusion of intellectual culture and general intelligence among us than among any other people, and we stand higher than any other as to liberty and equality. And yet there is not a nation upon earth

it and encouraged, shall burst their chains, and walk erect and free upon the fair earth which God has given them.

When, at first, we set up for independence, the priesthood and kings and nobles looked upon us with surprise and contempt. "What do these feeble Jews?" they said. "If a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." Next, they pitied us. "Poor orphans," they said, "that have no kings, nor church and state, to take care of them!" And they doubted not that we should go back to three-legged stools and skins and acorns. But we have kept along for more than three-quarters of a century, and have had several skirmishes upon land and sea in defence of our liberties, and in that time have made considerable corn and wheat, and beef and pork, and some to spare, — cotton, also, and woollen cloths, and a few chairs, and knives and forks and spoons, and farming utensils;—and, under the banner of God and liberty, we have faith to believe that we shall hold on, till the Gospel has done for all nations what it has done for us.

There are, it is true, some among us who are not willing to "let pretty well alone," and are anxious to try the experiment of making us *more* free and happy. They have discovered, they think, that there is no God; that the Bible is a fable, and civil government a usurpation of human rights; that separate families and separate property are a curse; that it is a vile monopoly for any man to have any wife in particular, or for a son to know and love his father; that modesty is an insult and persecution, and brass the inherent right of woman; that liberty is the right of every man to do as he pleases, and equality the right of every man to be as tall, and as strong, and handsome, and wise, and witty, as his neighbor; and to dress as well, and enjoy as fine a house and

equipage, and to eat and drink as much by weight and measure, as his neighbor.

You remember, I suppose, the dog with a marrow-bone in his mouth, who swam the river, and, to grasp the shadow, lost the substance. And you, I trust, will not imitate his example, by giving up the greatest blessings ever bestowed by Heaven, not for a shadow, but for the greatest sufferings that ever came upon a guilty nation. You will think it best, I doubt not, to wait until some other nation has made a more successful experiment on the principles of Atheism, before you abandon God and the Bible, and the civil and religious institutions of your country.

Atheism was the rod of God's anger, by which he overturned and dashed in pieces the governments and hierarchies of Europe, who took counsel against the Lord and his anointed.

But the wild power which destroyed thrones and feudal systems and ecclesiastical dominions in Europe, would blow to atoms our republic, rulers, priests and people, and introduce, first, anarchy intolerable, and then an everlasting despotism. It is for want of the Bible, and the moral government of God, in Europe, that liberty is struggling for life between revolutions and anarchy and despotisms; and when in our nation religion and liberty and constitutions and laws shall be, by the people, identified with European despotisms, and regarded with hate, not kings and priests only, and temples and Sabbaths, will be swept away, but the whole generation will be involved in a vortex of fire and blood. "In that day shall kings, and great men, and rich men, and chief captains, and the mighty men, and every *bond-man, and every free-man*, hide themselves in dens and in the rocks of the mountains; saying to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us

from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

But recently another generation of infidels have sprung up, confident that the experiment was not fairly made, and that, the church and the Gospel having failed, reason and philosophy are the last hope of man. And, for some time past, they have been turning their attention to the laboring classes of our nation; since which, I have trembled for my country. For I know that the heart and bone and sinews of liberty are with the laboring men of my country,—the agriculturists, artisans, and all sorts of laborers. And I know that, unperverted, they will defend her institutions forever.

But I know, too, who has carried among them lying sophistries and corrupting principles. And I have looked on and wept, and would fain have come to the rescue of this best and last hope of my country. For when you fail, the last citadel of liberty has been undermined and laid in ruins. And if ever I longed for the power of ubiquity, it was that I might stand by every laborer while the deceiver was poisoning his soul, and, with Ithuriel spear, compel that deceiver, Satan-like, to stand up in his own malignant, horrible, repellent character.

I have heard, on the other side, all, and more than all, which you have heard. And, after repeated and careful examinations, I do not hesitate to assure you, that it can all be refuted, and has been, times without number. And if hard mental and physical action may constitute a working man, I hope to be admitted into your fraternity, as a friend and counsellor. For, beside my own direct claims, all my American ancestors were farmers or artisans. My father was an athletic and hard-laboring man, intelligent, patriotic,

and well versed in history, geography, and the constitution of the United States, and was respected and beloved by his fellow-citizens; and, more than all, was a Christian.

I have good hope, therefore, that you will receive kindly this volume, which I dedicate to you, and that you will read it with candor and care, and impartial and earnest attention.

Moral Atheism is the aversion of the heart to God and his government. It implies no impotency of intellect; but its perversion, by the obliquity of the heart. It is not the understanding which revolts against evidence, but the heart which revolts against holiness and moral obligation. The language of the heart consists in feeling; and to say in the heart, "no God," is to wish there were none. This aversion to the existence of God springs, however, from no disinterested malignity to his being, provided it implied no law, accountability, guilt, and danger.

It is against God as a moral governor, reigning over men by a law which is holy and just and good, that the heart of the fool makes insurrection. Its language is, No accountability, no fear, no restraint, no self-denial, no change of heart and life to escape perdition, and no reward or punishment in a future state according to deeds.

Speculative Atheism is the actual belief of what the heart thus desires. It is giving up the understanding to strong delusion, to believe a lie.

The first aberration of alienated mind before the flood was manifested in licentiousness and violence; the second in idolatry—the worship by visible symbols of local divinities inhabiting the several departments of nature. The increase of philosophy united these scattered energies into one almighty mind, from which inferior minds were emanations, like sparks from heavenly bodies, to be in due time absorbed again. Gradu-

ally, however, as animalism prevailed, and the darkness deepened, the intelligence and voluntary action of this great mind went out, and left only an unthinking, all-pervading energy — the soul of the world, and the *primum mobile* of all motion in the universe, according to the attributes and laws of self-existent and eternal nature.

This is Pantheism, which makes the world God, and God the world. It is the atheism which was in France the offspring of perverted Christianity; and it is substantially the form which the infidelity of this country has assumed. Most who doubt are as much unsettled concerning the being of a God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state, as about the Bible. It is denominated political atheism, because, in France and here, its theories extend to the modification of the religious, civil, and social state of man, — contemplating nothing less than the abolition of marriage and the family state, separate property, civil government, and all sense of accountability, and all religious worship;— an effort to turn the world up side down, and empty it of every institution, thought, feeling, and action, which has emanated from Christianity, to unite mankind under the auspices of atheism.

That such associations exist, and are acting in correspondence, and are extending themselves through the country, is a matter of notoriety. That they can no longer, with safety, be despised, or permitted to move on without some effort to apprize the community of their character and designs, is equally certain; for, though no doubt public sentiment, when brought to act upon them, will render them harmless, it is no less true that the reality and nature of these associations must be understood, that this great corrector may act upon them.

It will be the object, therefore, of this lecture, to illustrate the doctrines, the follies, and dangers, of Political Atheism.

The creed inscribed on the black flag around which these men have rallied is short and dreadful. It is raised high, and floats on the breeze, proclaiming, in capitals, to every eye, that THERE IS NO GOD — NO RESURRECTION — NO FUTURE STATE — NO FREE AGENCY — NO ACCOUNTABILITY — NO VIRTUE — NO SIN — NO DEVIL — NO HEAVEN — NO HELL — AND THAT DEATH IS AN ETERNAL SLEEP: that man is a thinking, reasoning machine, governed mechanically, according to the laws of animated matter: that evidence governs the understanding, and motives the will, on the same principle that percussion moves the pebble, and weights turn the scales; and that all events are made certain by a material, mechanical necessity. There is nothing in the universe but matter, is the one article of the atheist's creed.

The political part of this creed is, that all coërcive government by law is a contravention of liberty, and arbitrary and unjust: that separate property is but a limb of the feudal system, and an anti-republican monopoly: that marriage is an unreasonable restraint on liberty, and ought to be abolished; and the family to be disbanded, as the citadel of selfishness and separate property, and all those aristocratic monopolies for the subversion of liberty, the perpetuity of priestcraft, and the vile union of church and state: that the fear of God is a delusion; conscience, superstition; natural affection, the prejudice of education; chastity, pusillanimous; and incontinence, magnanimous.

To those who are not initiated in these mysteries, it may be a matter of terrific curiosity to understand how all this is to be accomplished. An outline only can be given.

The belief in God's existence is to be obliterated, by exposing the sophistry that universal design is evidence of an intelligent designer, and accounting for the existence of things by the agency of almighty chance. The Bible is to be driven out of circulation, by the detection and exposure of its imposture, absurdity, and pernicious influence. The Sabbath is to be obliterated, as a waste of time, and its place supplied by occasional holidays for amusement and pleasure. Marriage is to be hooted out of society as a contemptible usurpation of liberty, while the entire race of men, free as other animals, wander over the great common field, and hold promiscuous intercourse, and eat, and drink, and propagate, and die. The property of the world is to become a common stock, to which each is to contribute by his labor, and from which he is to receive his rations of food and raiment in due season. The progeny of these emancipated animals is to be educated at the public expense; and legislators, instead of enacting laws for the government of men, are to be occupied in regulating those material circumstances, whose mechanical power in education shall effectuate their perfection, and introduce the atheistical political millennium. In the application of this nurture and admonition, all are to be made equal in education, and continued equal in honor and property, that there may be no superiority to occasion pride, and no inferiority to provoke envy, but one great plain, without protuberance or indentation, over which the whole team, equally yoked, may move on to annihilation in blessed equanimity.

This hopeful change in human affairs is to be accomplished by the indefatigable and systematic effort of the initiated to revolutionize public sentiment, until it shall speak at the polls and in the halls of legislation, and vote out of the world

God, and the Bible, and the Sabbath and public worship, and the Gospel ministry, and marriage, and the family, and all inequality of knowledge and honor and profit, and all government but the government of circumstances, to make way for the millennium of reason and nature, in which man may live without God, and obey the flesh without shame, and die without fear.

In this crusade against Christianity and Heaven, the press is to be deeply enlisted; and, by periodicals, and newspapers, and tracts, and caricature prints, everywhere disseminated, is to dispel the existing darkness, pour daylight on the human mind, and inoculate the people with the virus of indomitable liberty, to whose ferocious heart and fiery eye religious and civil liberty, and inequality of property, the restraints of law, and virtue itself, shall be represented as usurpation and treason; and the pavements, which in Europe are torn up to batter down despotism, shall here be turned against the temples of God and the laws of the land. As a powerful auxiliary in this work of universal emancipation, woman is to be enlisted — woman, unperverted, the pattern of whatsoever things are pure and lovely; but, herself corrupted, a paragon of deformity, a demon in human form.

But, as Mahomet, when deception moved him on to power, shortened the process of conversion by force, so these friends of universal liberty, when power shall second inclination, intend and now threaten to put out the Sun of righteousness, and compel us to float through life in the stream of licentious animalism. Upon both parts of this system, its falsehood and its folly, I must be permitted to make a few observations.

Under the first head, I have the following remarks to offer: —

1. It is a thing eminently to be desired, that there should be a supreme benevolent Intelligence, who is the creator and moral governor of the universe, whose subjects and kingdom shall endure forever. Such a one the nature of man demands, and his whole soul pants after.

We feel our littleness in presence of the majestic elements of nature, and our weakness compared with their power, and our loneliness in the vast universe, unenlightened, unguided, and unblessed, by any intelligence superior to our own. We behold the flight of time, the passing fashion of the world, and the gulf of annihilation curtained with the darkness of an eternal night. At the side of this vortex, which covers with deep oblivion the past, and impenetrable darkness the future, nature shudders and draws back; and the soul, with sinking heart, looks mournfully around upon this fair creation, and up to these beautiful heavens, and in plaintive accents demands: "Is there, then, no deliverance from this falling back into nothing? Must this conscious being cease, — this reasoning, thinking power, — and these warm affections, — their delightful movements? Must this eye close in an endless night, and this heart fall back upon everlasting insensibility? O, thou cloudless sun, and ye far-distant stars, in all your journeyings in light, have ye discovered no blessed intelligence who called you into being, lit up your fires, marked your orbits, wheels you in your courses, around whom ye roll, and whose praises ye silently celebrate? Are ye empty worlds and desolate, the sport of chance; or, like our sad earth, are ye peopled with inhabitants, waked up to a brief existence, and hurried reluctantly, from an almost untasted being, back to nothing? O, that

there were a God, who made you, greater than ye all, whose being in yours we might see, whose intelligence we might admire, whose will we might obey, and whose goodness we might adore!" Such, except where guilt seeks annihilation as the choice of evils, is the unperverted, universal longing after God and immortality.

2. There is no evidence that there is not a self-existent eternal Mind, who is the creator and providential and moral governor of the universe. Something, it is admitted, must have been eternal; and it may as well be self-existent mind as self-existent matter. It is as easy to conceive of a mind self-existent and eternal, which shall systematize the universe, as of a self-existent eternal systematized material universe. That which exists without beginning or cause without itself, cannot be reasoned about, and may be one thing as well as another. It may as well be believed that there is a self-existent voluntary mind, as that there is a self-existent organized universe.

3. The evidence of the existence of a self-existent Mind is as great as it would be if what we behold were, in fact, the product and evidence of such an existence. The only evidence of invisible intelligent mind is the manifestation of design; and the only evidence of design is the adaptation of means to ends, in such a manner as cannot be accounted for by accident, without the absurdity of supposing effects without a cause.

But, if there were a God who spread abroad these heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and balanced the solar system, and sent his handy workmanship, from its stupendous development in guiding great events, down, through all the gradations and departments of nature, to the confines of nothing, he could not, by the adaptation of

means to ends, more clearly or fully declare his eternal power and godhead. Every page is covered and crowded with plans and their execution. If design, then, is evidence of a designer, we might exclaim, Whither shall we go from thy presence?

4. The supposition that all these indications of design are the results of the unthinking, undesigning energies of nature, involves the contradiction of supposing an endless series of effects without a cause; for, though nature might be supposed to move without thought, uniform and all-pervading design is a kind of movement to be accounted for only from mind. You might as well account for the existence of change without cause, as for uniform and universal design without mind. Design without intelligence is therefore an effect without a cause; and therefore a universal *conatus* of nature cannot be the cause of the order, and beauty, and design, which meet the eye on every page of nature's book.

5. There are no facts which go to prove the existence of design without a designer.

The instinct of the bee does, indeed, produce her mathematically constructed dwelling; but that instinct itself demands, or it indicates, an intelligent cause: for no one will suppose that the bee has studied mathematics, or that, unguided by mind, mathematical figures would grow up under her instinctive industry.

The affinities of matter, which unite particles in mathematical forms, are admitted to indicate design; but, as matter itself does not think, it indicates the arrangement of a mind not its own; all is material action without design.

6. The validity of design, as evidence of an intelligent designer, is universally admitted in respect to man.

It is admitted that man is a rational, intelligent, voluntary being, acting by design. But the only evidence of it is contained in his works. Blot out evidence of design, and you throw over mind the veil of idiocy. The evidence of an intelligent mind in man, contained in the evidence of design in his works, is conclusive.

No one has the hardihood to examine cities, manufactories, farms, turnpikes, steamboats, railroads, book-stores, fleets and armies, and deny to man the visitations of reason. But the only difference in the argument, as applied to men and to God, is the extent and complication of a universal design, above the narrow limits of human intellect.

We only add, that the evidence of the being of a supreme intelligent mind, from universal design, is not the result of multiplied probabilities, but is a strict demonstration of the being of God.

That no effect can exist without a cause, is a self-evident proposition. That design, produced by undesigning causes, is an effect without a cause, is equally self-evident; and that universal design indicates a universal designer, as clearly as human design indicates a limited designer; and that the designer, whose plans pervade the universe, is the self-existent, eternal, almighty mind, who moves and governs the universe, are all alike intuitive.

The folly of Political Atheism consists in the reversing of all this reasoning,—in teaching that effects may exist without a cause, and universal design without a designer. The existence of a watch proves on earth the existence of an intelligent mind; but the mechanism of the universe proves nothing.

It happened unexplained, and came without cause, from chaos, into order and beauty. The conjectures concerning

the progress of this great accident are various. One only can be given; but this, though short, is full of wonders.

Sometime ago, after chaos and old night had reigned undisturbed from eternity, and matter had fermented, and tossed and rolled into almost infinite forms, it happened to fall, for the first time, into just those relations which constituted the volcanic power; when, in a moment, an explosion took place, loud as ten thousand thunders, which sent out innumerable suns, flying in fusion through space, streaming athwart the darkness their baleful light, till they stopped, and became fixed stars in the glorious firmament above. But they carried in their bosom the sad accidents which gave them birth; and new throes ensued, sending out around them comets, and planets, and satellites, all moving in elliptic orbits with arithmetical accuracy, so that, for ages past, and for ages to come, the almanac discloses their movements with as exact an accuracy as the clock tells of time. What chance it was which checked their flight, and, by a resolution of forces, wheeled them round in their elliptic career; or why, the centripetal power exhausted, they did not fall back, with accelerated momentum, into the horrible crater whence they sprung; or where that mass might be, which could furnish matter of which to make the universe, and sustain the reäction of sending it out,—that mighty cannon, whose shot are suns and worlds,—our philosophers have not yet discovered. But so it happened; they were exploded, and as yet they have not fallen back, or ceased to move.

And now, leaving the suns, and orbs, and other systems, we descend to trace the history of our own mother earth, whom we meet reeking from her recent explosion, her waves of fire tossing and raging; which, as they cooled, crusted and

stood upright as a heap, and became the perpetual hills and everlasting mountains. The weightier masses sunk downward, towards the centre, with lighter and lighter deposits above, leaving the crust, when pulverized, for fallow ground and harvest.

As yet, however, the earth was without form and void, and a hideous nakedness spread over its late burning surface. When, strange to tell, grass and trees sprang up, and began to ornament the hills and carpet the valleys; and hard on the footsteps of this wonder trod another; — the waters teemed with organic life, which lashed with oar the pliant wave, and sported in the deep, — and suddenly the hills sent down to the valleys, and the valleys sent back to the hills, the bleating of flocks and herds, while the groves sent forth the joyous notes of birds and insects. All these, in grand concert, burst out upon the silence of nature; and all, as they needed, waited on almighty chance, who gave them their meat in due season.

The organization of this delighted choir was such as demanded respiration, and the flowing of a warm blood, for which an elastic atmosphere was needed; and it happened, as the earth cooled and consolidated, that several gases escaped from confinement, so exactly of the same specific gravity, and blessed with such social and friendly dispositions, that they agreed to exist in partnership, and to surround the earth, and most benevolently to volunteer their aid for respiration,—each, alone, deadly to life, but united, its sustaining power.

This world of breathing animation rose up with optics — camera obscura in the head, to pencil inside the images of objects without. When, lo! the orb of day, when he fled from his heated prison, forgot not, in his panic, to take with

him stores of light, manufactured for immediate use, which ever since he has been pouring out, unexhausted, in marvellous abundance; — light, so dexterously compounded of seven colors as to be colorless, and well adapted to the purposes of vision.

But, amid this exuberance of animated being, there was not a man to till the ground, or admire the beauties of nature. Behold, then, another wonder: the fortuitous concourse of atoms, before the earth so cooled as to stop fermentation, produced a human skeleton, — around which, with kind affinity, came the sinews and the muscles, and took their places. The lungs for breathing, and the arteries and veins to carry around the vital fluid, offered their aid, and were accepted. The nervous system — semi-animal, semi-spiritual — took its middle place, as arbitrator between the soul and the body. And, to cover what otherwise had been unsightly, kind nature provided a blanket, and, with kind sympathy, threw its velvet covering over the whole. The eye, too, lit itself up accidentally, just at the moment it was wanted, and the socket stood excavated for its reception, and the mucus warm to make it easy, and the ligament to tie it in. The mouth opened at the right time to prevent suffocation, and in the right place for speech, and ornamented with double rows of ivory for mastication. While nature's self, with pencil dipped in the colors of heaven, stood by, well pleased to put upon her beauteous workmanship the finish of the sparkling eye, and rosy cheek, and ruby lip. All this, however, had constituted only a beauteous animal, but for the glorious accident of a machine for thinking, which happened to pass that way, and consented to stop a little, and make an experiment of its powers in the upper department of this marvellous product of chance. It took its place, and swung the pendulum, and

has continued to go, with surprising accuracy; though latterly, in some instances, it has seemed to be out of order, and to stand in need of some little rectification, in respect to its reasoning powers.

There is no evidence, then, that the indications of design around and above us are the results of accident, or of eternal material causes. None, that when the earth had so cooled as not to scald, and was so liquid that affinities could come together, men, self-made, like locusts, crawled out of the slime, and managed to get on their feet, and, by experience, ascertained the centre of motion and learned to walk. If such had been the sport of nature, we should expect to find fragments of bodies, as you find iron castings in your founderies; heads, legs, ribs, arms, and teeth, in wild confusion. For, why should nature always happen to finish a thing? But, in nature's workshop all is complete, working always, without intellect and voluntary design, as if she had understanding, and worked according to the wise and "benevolent counsel of her own eternal will."

All indications of design in the arts of life are traceable to intelligent minds: no one for a moment believes that sawmills and steamboats were ever made without intelligent design; and the man who should make a pond of water, and throw in all sorts of chemical materials, and stir them up, and wait for beds and chairs to happen, would have to wait a great while. The age of such accidents, if they ever did occur, must have long since passed away.

It must be confessed, however, that those who retail such dreams lay their scenes so distant in past duration that none can possibly convict them of falsehood by opposing facts.

But, suppose that, a great way this side of eternity and fabulous history, and in the region of common sense, I should

ask you, "Who built that furnace?" would any of you answer, "Nobody built it. There was a pond of water there once, and, when it was drying up, somehow, by the action of chemical affinities, one night, it came up out of the mud?"

"But, who made that steam-engine?" "Why, nature, when she saw that she had a workshop, thought she would try her hand at the arts; and so she threw in the plentiful material which kindled up the fire, and out came this steam-engine."

We prove, then, the existence of the eternal Mind, just as we prove that of the human mind. Just as you prove yourselves to be rational beings, so do I prove the being of a God. But, if you deny that design proves a designer, then will I deny your rationality, and treat you as animals of instinct; but, if you admit the evidence of your own rationality, you cannot resist the inference, — it will sweep upward, and stop only at the throne of God.

Suppose you should send out now a committee through this city, to ascertain whether there be in it any indications of mind, and they should return and report that "your committee have made diligent search, and can find no evidence of any such thing."

"What! did you go into the stores, and did you see no manufactured goods?"

"O, yes; we saw such things in great abundance, but nothing that might not have come by chance, as well as grass and trees."

"But, did you go into the jewellers' stores, and the toy-shops?"

"Yes; we went everywhere, and saw nothing but the products of nature,— all the offspring of chance."

"But, did you see no men and women, and children?"

"Yes; we saw a plenty of these automatons, children of

nature, going about; but we saw no evidence that they had any mind,—nothing which indicated that they might not have come by chance, as well as the sun and solar system, and the horses and mules, and other animals that we saw along the streets."

But, suppose your committee should return and report that at every step they found evidence of intelligent mind. Then let them sweep with the telescope the glorious concave of heaven, and with the microscope the glorious world of equal wonders beneath, and they would proclaim that the evidence of mortal intelligence was nothing, compared with the overwhelming evidence of the existence of an Almighty God.

Let us now attend to a new and more direct and positive evidence,—that *the aggregate of material causes* is not the cause of universal apparent design, and that *mind* is the cause.

We observe, then, that it is intuitively certain that *something* must be eternal. For, absolute nothing could not begin to be or to do anything. Had there ever been a period, therefore, in which nothing existed, there could have been no existence now. It is the universal philosophical proposition of Mahometan, Pagan, and Christian, that from nothing no positive existence can come into being. No star had twinkled, or firmament had spread its curtain athwart the sky; no solid earth had appeared, or track of foot, animal or human. The wind had not breathed, and the wave had not rolled; for all around and everywhere is blank vacancy — space, infinite, unoccupied — and dead silence. But; something does exist; therefore something is eternal.

It is also self-evident, that whatever is eternal is self-existent, unbeginning, underived, uncaused, uncreated; possessing

in itself the resources of its own being. This is the true and only correct conception of self-existence.

It is alike intuitive, that whatever is self-existent is immutable; for, being the first existence, and above and independent of, and anterior to, all causes but those of its own existence, it cannot be approached and exposed to changes, by causes without itself, nor to the decay and failure or change of the essential resources of its own being.

That, therefore, which has in and of itself existed from all eternity, must be the same, and now in no danger of failure or change in the eternity which is to come. Whatever, therefore, is self-existent and surrounded by universal vacancy, must be from everlasting to everlasting the same.

But what is this self-existent eternal something?

There are but two known existences in the universe, — *matter* and *mind;* and that these are real, and different, and opposite existences, is as obvious and as certain as the existence of either.

We learn the existence of matter from its attributes and various causative powers; and we ascertain the existence of mind by its different and opposite attributes and causative powers.

Matter is a solid extended substance, unperceiving, unfeeling, unthinking, unreasoning; without desire, will, design, or executive energy; inert and immovable, but as moved by a power other than its own.

Mind is just the opposite of matter, — a perceiving, thinking, feeling, social, reasoning, desiring, voluntary executive energy, whose nature it is to act by its own powers, in perception, feeling, thought, reasoning, desire, choice, and action, as it is of matter to be a solid, extended, inert substance. The proof that matter and mind exist is obvious to inspection, and as

great as it can be; and the proof that mind exists as mind, and distinct from matter, is as great as that matter exists as matter. And the evidence that they are totally different and opposite existences is as obvious and certain, as that one kind of matter differs from another, or that matter or mind exist at all.

Having, then, ascertained that something is self-existent and eternal, and that matter and mind both exist, we approach the question, which of the two is the eternal self-existent? and this we can decide only by their well-known properties, and their adaptation to produce the things that are. If the attributes of matter are adapted to produce the things that are, and those of mind are not adequate, our verdict must be, that matter is the self-existent.

But if matter should appear demonstrably inadequate, and mind well adapted and competent, to produce the things that be, then mind must be regarded as the eternal self-existent.

But, in exploring the earth, a large portion of matter is found in organic forms of life and motion, of which matter knows nothing, and for which it has no inherent power; such as grass, plants, shrubs, trees, insects, fish, fowls, animals, and human bodies. But it is certain that these organic, living, moving forms, did not of their own accord spring up from dead matter, whose first and only law is the power of lying still till moved. History has recorded no examples of self-organized matter, and all the progress made in chemistry in this nineteenth century affords no encouragement that such discoveries will be made. No chemist has yet been able to make a spire of grass, or a single leaf, or insect, or animal,— much less a human body, with a thinking, reasoning, active mind, the result of material combinations. These all are certainly beyond the sphere of material power, and are

not eternal; for then they must be self-existent, and then immutable, and then they must be in existence now,—eternal self-existent men and women and children, and cattle and trees, and all things.

But, we find no eternal men, nor oxen, nor trees; but rather that all things that exist now — all the men and women and children, and trees and animals — are of recent existence, and have come down to us from others of their kind, that have passed away. Whereas, if all things were from the beginning as now, an eternal aggregate, all things that now exist are eternal, and we ourselves are eternal, though our memory extends back but a few years, and our existence is hastening to a close.

But there is no greater nonsense than the supposition of an eternal material nature, self-existent, and immutable, and just as things now are. Every one of all the indications of design, in organized matter and living bodies, disproves the agency of matter, and demonstrates the attributes and agency of mind.

If we ascend from the earth and examine the phenomena of the heavens, we behold greater wonders of design, and mental executive energy: immense bodies of matter in motion, indicative of wisdom, benevolence, and power, which may well be denominated infinite; and at such immeasurable distances as renders them fit symbols of the immensity of the power which made and sustains and controls them.

By their analogies, it is manifest they are composed of matter, so far as respects their mutual attraction. And their motion is not the result of their own power of attraction. The power of gravity, being in straight parallel lines, is not a power of action, but ultimately of rest; so that, without another and an equal transverse power, if the planets of

our system had been shot out of volcanoes, they must long since have fallen back into their immeasurable crater, and been at rest.

Whence, then, is the power which holds the sun in his place, in relation to the other suns in space, and prevents his own family of planets and comets from rushing into his bosom?

Whence it is not, we know. It is certain that matter has no such power; and it is equally certain, as a matter of fact, that a transverse power at right angles with the attraction of gravity does exist, and, by a resolution of forces, bends the family of planets to revolve about their parent sun in elliptical orbits, and with an efficiency that has not varied for ages, and with the accuracy of a chronometer. Can this be the instinctive conatus of maternal nature, the effervescence of gases and acids and alkalies, or the chemical combinations of minerals and salt water? Do these orbs regulate our clocks, and measure out our time and seasons? What, then, can be that mighty power that gave it the transverse impulse, but He that "measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance"? Who, but God, the eternal, omniscient, and almighty? If you remember that all these planets and satellites and comets are in mazes of constant and swift motion, varying continually their relations and mutual attractions towards the sun and one another, modifying their centre of motion and their orbits, you must see the necessity of an omniscient, omnipotent power.

It has lately been discovered by astronomers that the nebulæ of the milky way are fixed stars; and that these, with all the others, not only maintain their relative posi-

tions to one another, but are beginning to indicate a common motion in the same direction, as if revolving around some common centre. Are such sublime indications of wisdom, benevolence, and power, to be swept away by an alleged eternal, unproved and disproved, almighty, unthinking, undesigning nothing?

We have now consummated the evidence of an eternal self-existent mind. To our conception, it is as great as the evidence of any existence whatever,— as great as evidence can be. And yet, various objections to this evidence are urged by sceptics, and arise in the minds of other thinking men. We shall, therefore, not have done full justice to the subject, and have met the exigencies of the working men, till we have stated and answered them.

Objection 1st. It has been said that there is no such thing in the universe as cause and effect,— nothing but powerless antecedents and consequents, which we call causes and effects, because they always appear together.

This is the theory of Hume, and of several other philosophers who were not sceptics. The argument is, that we cannot see the causative power, and therefore there is none.

But are invisible causes no causes? Is the invisible *modus operandi* no mode of action? Who sees the gases, or the electric power, or the attraction of gravity? and is there, therefore, in these, no causative power, because they are invisible? What is the proof? Assertion only. What is the evidence of the reality of causative power in antecedents and consequents? That universally the results are as they would be if the antecedents were the causes of the consequents, and there is no evidence to the contrary; while this concurrence itself of mere antecedents without causative

power is a universal phenomenon, wholly without any cause, and wholly without any evidence.

It must be admitted that if there are no causes within our cognizance, there are no effects; and it would be impossible to rise up through nature's works to nature's God. Indeed, it would be difficult to prove that there is any such thing as nature. It is true, that what we call the laboring men have, in their simplicity, thought that there are real causes: that the ox, by the chain, draws the plough that turns the furrow; and the woodman, by his axe, cuts the wood; and the artisan thinks that his saw and chisel do execution. But this nineteenth century has developed such effulgences of light, that we cannot tell what we be, or where we be, or whether we be at all. So that we all may say, emphatically, What nothings were our fathers, and what nothings to our children are we!

Objection 2d. It is said that the argument from effect to cause proves too much; involving the necessity of supposing another God, the creator of him who made the heavens and the earth, and another that created him, and onward *ad infinitum*.

Our answer is, that our argument involves no such thing; for, as we infer the existence of the human mind from the indications men afford of mental being, so we infer the existence of a greater mind, whose work proclaims him omnipotent, inhabiting eternity, and filling immensity with suns and worlds. Were there no indications of mental being beyond the sphere of human agency, we should stop at man; but the indications of mental being, and attributes that fill the universe with suns and worlds, afford as conclusive evidence of an infinite mind, as human plans and works afford of the human mind. And we go no further, because we have

found a cause adequate to all that is seen and known; and we go no further, because we have yet to find a scrap of evidence of any other or greater effects than those produced by him whose invisible attributes are clearly seen by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.

But, whenever another universe shall be discovered so much greater than that manifested by our God, and demanding a greater God than he to create it, then we will think about it; but, until then, as at present advised, we shall continue to worship the God of the present discovered universe, as the only self-existent, eternal, almighty, wise, benevolent, and true God.

Objection 3d. There is no necessity, it is said by some, of a self-existent, eternal Mind. All we see of men and things may have come down from eternity in infinite succession, with all their variety of attributes, energies, and effects, just as they are, and always will be,—an infinite series, for example, of men and trees.

Answer. It may be that all things have not come down by succession from eternity. There is no necessity of supposing this. There is no evidence that it is so; and the evidence is as great as it can be that it is not so. That mind is the author of this world and the universe, is as evident as that the human mind is the author of the plans and products of its power and skill within its sphere. And the evidence of the existence of the Divine Mind is as much greater than the evidence of the human mind, as his works, in number, wisdom, benevolence, power, and immensity, surpass the works of man. But the supposed infinite series of men is a palpable impossibility.

For an infinite which can be increased is no infinite at all;

but numerals, units, can never be so augmented as that they do not admit of more. An infinite series of numbers is as really an impossibility, as that infinite space should be filled by finite creations.

But an infinite succession of causes and effects is as absurd as it is impossible. For, to get rid of a self-existent eternal mind, it supposes every part of this series to be the effect of an antecedent cause, while the aggregate whole is an effect utterly without a cause.

Suppose a chain should descend, in our presence, from an unknown height, and I should demand, What supports that lower link? You would answer, The link above it. And what supports that? The third and the fourth, and so on. But what supports the entire chain? It is an infinite chain, and hangs on nothing! It is a perfect contradiction, which assumes that every link is dependent on another, while the whole is without support, — a series of effects without a cause.

Objection 4th. But, it is said that we may as well suppose matter, with all its attributes, and appearances of design and power, self-existent and eternal, as to suppose a self-existent eternal mind.

Answer. Were we to reason *a priori* what the eternal self-existence must be, or how many kinds there might be, we might suppose what we pleased on subjects that we know nothing about, and publish dreams and Arabian Nights' Entertainments. We might promulgate fantastic theories as to the elementary structure of the moon, and confidently dogmatize upon the nature of the dark spots on the sun; and multiply systems of the imagination endless as the changing forms of the kaleidoscope, but as far from truth as the spider's web is from a cable, or a vacuum from substance.

But our argument for the being of a God does not rest on *a priori* reasonings or theories, or suppositions baseless, but on facts which cannot be disputed without denying the existence of all things.

We reject matter, therefore, as the eternal self-existence, because the known attributes and phenomena of the material universe are such as matter cannot produce.

The supposition is a begging of the question, not only without evidence, but against all possible evidence. It is a contradiction of the immemorial nature and universal definition of matter, as a substance inert, unperceiving, unfeeling, unthinking, and motionless, till moved.

The power, for example, that starts the motion of the planets, does not belong to matter. It is a power transverse to the power of gravity, without which every planet would have been at rest, long since, in the sun; a power so nicely balancing that of attraction, as, by a resolution of forces, to produce an elliptical orbit.

There is the comet, also, apparently the lightest and loosest form of moving matter, smitten with such affection for the sun as requires such a transverse stroke to balance it, as sends him, panic-struck and blazing, through an eccentric orbit of many years. Who gave that impulse to the planet, and that stronger impulse to the comet? Matter, from all her worlds in motion, declares, It is not in me.

Then, the turning of the earth on her axis — the cause of day and night, and the standard of the measurement of time — is the result of no material cause; for the earth moves without friction, *in vacuo*, which could originate no revolving power. What, then, is the power by which she turns on her axis? And the earth, as the universe before, answers, It is not in me.

We now turn our attention to the human body, to decide

whether matter is competent to its organization, and life, and powers of action. The body is composed of four generic kinds of matter, of almost endlessly diversified composition, to constitute the bones, sinews, ligaments, muscles, brain, and nerves — that convey to the brain the reports of the senses, and either of which being cut, the intelligence stops by the way. Then, there are the five senses, which send through the nerves their intelligence to the royal mind: the eye, a camera obscura, sending in, in miniature, the image of things without; the ear, a trumpet, to gather sound to a focus on the drum; the nose, to aid in breathing, when the mouth is closed, and to warn us of the presence of grateful or repellent effluvia; taste, to alleviate the irksomeness of eating by the compensations of appetite and pleasure; and the net-work of nerves spread over the whole body, to watch, and give notice of the slightest aggression made on its surface, so that the point of a pin cannot touch it without a sentinel's sending instantly the intelligence to head-quarters. Beside these, there are numbers of distinct departments to coöperate in the complex general result: the brain, through which the mind receives intelligence, and acts upon the voluntary muscles of the body; the stomach, a chemical laboratory, to receive and decompose the materials of nutrition; the lacteals, taking up the nourishing fluid, and sending it on its way, through vein and heart, to the lungs, — there to be oxygenated and electrified, and thence delivered back to the heart, which, by its unceasing, untiring, and mighty power, drives it through the round of arteries and veins, those highways and byways, through which it wanders, till, exhausted by its deposits, it returns for a new supply.

A similar contrivance sustains the life of all animals of blood, and to all plants and trees a system appertains by

which they may draw fluid nutrition from the earth, each according to its nature.

But all these organized forms are foreign to matter. It has no nature, and no laws of nature, that could produce these things; and to assume that it has such powers, is to beg the question again, and contradict the admitted nature and definition of matter, — as a solid, extended, unperceiving, unfeeling, unthinking substance. It has in itself no power of motion, and no such mutual attraction of particles as would bring them together by affinities into the generic and specific compounds which constitute the structure of the human body. Let the sceptical chemist make a human body of all the required elements in due proportions; and let him appoint the day for nature, in the presence of thousands, to apply the vital spark, and start the heaving lungs, and electrify the circulating blood, and wake up thought, and the warm affections, and the energetic will; and let him bring his sacrifice, and from morning till evening cry, "O Nature, hear us!" — and there will be neither noise, nor motion, nor life.

If any one should insist that the particles of matter do feel and think, he must admit that she has been wonderfully patient, vexed as she has been with the plough and the hoe, and the footsteps of men, and the tramp of horses, and shock of battle, that in all time not one of her poor dumb mouths should have been opened to groan or complain. But, if the separate particles of matter do not think or feel, he must have a strong faith, to believe that nothing added to nothing could produce feeling, thought, and speech.

Objection 5th. A recent writer, the author of the Vestiges of Creation, modestly suggests, — That possibly matter may be the eternal self-existence, and the present condition of

the earth and its inhabitants the slow progressive results of the native energies, — a sort of tenuous *nebula* at first, and gradually, by a law of her own nature, tending towards consolidation and organization. The results of this self-moved *conatus* of matter, he supposes to have been developed, — first, in the lowest and most imperfect orders, such as worms and reptiles; next, in fish, and amphibious animals; then, in quadrupeds of higher and higher grades; and last, in the highest order of all, gradually approached through the monkey tribe, — man, the lord of the material self-creation. He then attempts, from geological discoveries of fossil remains, to establish this chronological order of nature, in the commencement and completion of her works; and with an apparent success that cheered the sceptical, and alarmed some pious minds.

But, upon this latest effort to set aside the evidence of a self-existent mind by the supposition of self-existent matter, we remark:

1. That it is a theory without an atom of evidence to sustain it.

2. It is in opposition to all the hitherto known laws and definitions of matter.

3. It is without the least logical support from his facts, were they all admitted to be real. For it is taken for granted by him, without the least evidence, that these beginnings, and approximations to motion and organization, are the self-moved action of matter, and not the progressive results of the action of an Almighty mind. But how did inert matter begin its first motion?

But, last of all, the underpinning of this mighty structure, which was to supplant the throne of God, in a moment fell, when Hugh Miller had discovered in the *old red sand-stone*, — a formation belonging to one of the earlier geological

epochs, — fossil remains of fish, the most perfect, and which, according to this theory, should have been the most imperfect; — in the light of which, the whole pyramid tumbled, as the baseless fabric of a vision. The theory remains, but its proofs are not forthcoming.

Objection 6th. The last objection I shall notice is among the most melancholy evidences of the weakness and wickedness of the alienated heart of man, and of the necessity of a revelation. It is a literary curiosity, at which we might smile, were it not the tomb-stone of all past and all coming generations. I extract, with his permission, from the Bibliotheca Sacra, Professor Stowe's account of the Hegelian philosophy. I do this, — first, because the accuracy of his quotations from the German will not be questioned; secondly, because the imminent perils of this philosophy to our nation have never been so intelligibly explained; and, thirdly, because the solemnity and weight of his warnings demand in every way the greatest practicable circulation.

"But what is the Hegelian philosophy? I have been admonished more than once to treat this philosophy with respect, to admire it at least as an 'exquisite work of art, if not a system of absolute truth.' I shall do my best, in this particular. I have acknowledged before, and here repeat the acknowledgment, that I have no very definite knowledge of it. It stands before me, in its bulk and its unintelligibleness, as a huge, shapeless, threatening spectre, most fitly described in the words of Virgil:

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.
(A monster, horrid, hideous, huge, and blind.)

But when I think of the tremendous influence it exerts, and the mighty mischief it is making, it assumes, to me (in the language of Milton),

> 'The other shape,
> If shape it may be called, which shape has none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
> Or substance may be called that shadow seems,
> For each seems either; black it stands as night,
> Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
> And shakes a dreadful dart; and what seems its head
> The likeness of a kingly crown has on.'

"We speak here of the Hegelian philosophy only in its connection with religion, and as it now exists. Whatever of obscurity may rest over some of its speculations, its principal bearings on religion are perfectly intelligible, and are carried out to their extreme consequences with a cool audacity that is almost frightful. According to Hegelianism, the *subjective* is not only more than the *objective*, but the *subjective* is the whole, it is the entire substance, and the *objective* has no existence except as the shadow, or reflection, or creation of the *subjective*. The great discovery boasted by Hegel and his followers, the great first principle of all truth, the honor of whose development Schelling in vain attempted to dispute with Hegel, is the *absolute identity of subject and object;* that is, I suppose, the thing perceiving and the thing perceived are one and the same thing.

"Admitting this as a fundamental principle, what is God? Is God the creator of man, or is man the creator of God? The latter, of course. The human mind is the only development of God,— only by the workings of the human soul does God arrive at self-consciousness; and if there were no men, there could be no God. There seems to be recognized a sort of *natura naturans*, — a sort of blind, unconscious, fermenting leaven, constantly working; but this never attains to personality or consciousness, except in the human soul.

"We will not ourselves undertake to make the statements

of the doctrines of this sect; we will take them just as they are made by one of the most able and active of the living advocates of the system, in his work entitled *Das Wesen des Christenthums.* This is a favorite book among the Germans of our own country, and can be obtained in any quantities at our principal German bookstores. A brief, but very satisfactory, notice of it has been given in the Christian Examiner, published in Boston, No. CLXI.

"Says this writer, 'The absolute Being, the God of man, is man's own being.' 'Since God is but our own being, the power of any object over us is the might of our own being. In willing, loving, feeling, etc., there is no influence but of ourselves over ourselves.' 'All limiting of the reason rests on error.' 'Every being is all-sufficient to itself.' 'It is delusion to suppose the nature of man a limited nature.' 'Religion is the consciousness of the infinite; it is and can be nothing but man's consciousness of his own infinite being.' 'If you think infinity, or feel infinity, it is the infinity of thought and feeling,—nothing else. The knowledge of God is the knowledge of ourselves; for the religious object is within us.' 'God is man's revealed inner nature — his pronounced self. Religion is the solemn unveiling of the concealed treasures of humanity, the disclosure of its secret thoughts, the confession of its dearest secrets. The Christian religion is the relation of man to his own being as to another being.' 'Religion is the dream of the human soul.'

"This is not caricature, nor ridicule, nor misrepresentation. It is just a plain statement of some of the prominent doctrines of the system, by one of its most able advocates. There is no God; and the devout man, when he thinks he is worshipping God, is simply worshipping himself. There is no accountability; there is no individual immortality; when a man dies,

his soul is reäbsorbed into the great mass of being, by the *natura naturans*, to be again, perhaps, in time developed, and so on from eternity to eternity. These principles are boldly and openly avowed, and find able and popular advocates both in Germany and in this country. One of the most eminent of the German republicans, Dr. Voight, of Giessen, during the summer of 1848, declared publicly in the Frankfort Parliament, that there could be no permanent freedom, till the idea of God, and of all responsibility to God, were entirely banished from the human mind. No wonder that the German revolution, with such men to lead it, proved a miserable failure. No wonder that the pious, intelligent, sober men of Europe, viewed the whole movement with distrust, and finally abandoned it altogether. Atheistic liberty is the worst kind of tyranny. An editorial article in a political newspaper, published in Cincinnati, during the present year, says, 'Religion is the cause of all the oppression which exists; inasmuch as it cajoles poor sufferers with the chimerical idea of a heaven hereafter; and the source of religion is want of education, ignorance. This is the origin of all evil.' The same principles, with a little more regard to a religious public sentiment, and partially disguised under a garb of specious phraseology, are zealously propagated in New England, and infect large numbers, especially of our educated young men. Before they begin to feel the need of religion, the foundation of religious faith is taken away. For this work of ruin, the genius of Hegelianism has peculiar facilities. It can approach unperceived, and accomplish its purpose before its presence is suspected. It can use the language of any theology, even the most orthodox, and convey its own ideas in the words of an evangelical faith.

"One of the phrases already quoted from Feuerbach may

serve as an example of the deceptive manner in which language may be used. It is this, 'God is man's inner nature, his pronounced self.' Here, it may be alleged, is the New Testament doctrine of the Logos, the God-man, God revealed; and in like manner we may get the Holy Ghost, as that may be considered to be the inner nature of man reäcting upon itself, and this may be called that spiritual influence which good men crave and pray for. Thus can the Hegelian atheist, with most conscientious deceptiveness, use all the language of the Trinitarian Christian. For the Trinity of Hegel, see the last number of the Bibliotheca, p. 293.

"With this philosophy, testimony is nothing, objective narrative is nothing; history is not to be learned from external sources,— it must be developed from within; facts must not be sought for,— they must be made; and on this principle they act with great consistency and vigor, as we shall see when we come to examine their theories of the Gospel history. Another of the principles of this philosophy is eminently a practical one, namely, that 'man is God, and must worship himself.' This the Hegelians do with the most enthusiastic devotion. Such self-worship was never before witnessed on earth. The enormous self-conceit of these men, the self-conceit of Hegel himself, the pitiful folly of his admirers who pronounced their eulogies over his grave, are among the greatest monstrosities which ever existed on this planet of monsters, comparable to nothing but the lizards larger than ten whales, and the frogs bigger than elephants, which are said to have existed on the pre-Adamite earth. Self-conceit is a symptom of the disease. The venerated Neander, in a letter to Prof. Schaff, of Mercersburg, justly characterizes the system as 'the philosophy of a one-sided logic, of intellectual fanaticism, and of *self-deification*.' My respected

friend, Prof. Schaff, himself, I am happy to see, takes no exceptions to this view of the subject. Indeed, he himself calls this kind of Hegelianism an 'arrogant pantheism, different from atheism only in form;' 'a lifeless formalism of the understanding, that destroys at last all soul in man, and turns him into a pure speculator on the open heath, an unfruitful thinker of thinking, a heartless critic and fault-finder.' (Schaff's Kirchenfreund for Jan., 1851; also, Mercersburg Review, vol. III., p. 81, ff.)

"There is no disinterestedness in this philosophy, there is no veneration, there is no love. Each being is all-sufficient to itself, and each revolves around itself as its own centre, and each is at the same time both planet and sun, both axis and orbit. And what can come of such kind of principles, but selfishness, and animalism, and every evil work?

"Now, it is such philosophers as these, who presume to sit in judgment on the New Testament, to estimate the characters therein portrayed, to determine as to what is, and what is not, fitting in a revelation from God to man; to decide with solemn majesty, *à priori*, from internal marks only, out of the depths of their own consciousness, and with nothing else to aid them, as to what is spurious, and what is genuine, in the sacred writings! How well they succeed, we shall see under our next head; and we will only say here, that if opposites are the best judges of opposites, if goats are the best judges of perfumes, if worms have suitable qualifications to decide on the merits of eagles, then are these men qualified to sit in judgment on Jesus, and the apostles, and the writers of the gospels. Yet their writings are published, translated into different languages, and extensively read. In various ways they exert a great influence even over those who never read them; the echoes of their voice reverberate from many a

newspaper and popular periodical; their sound is heard in many a lyceum, and mechanics' institute, and mercantile association, and debating club; they inflate the vanity, and heighten the self-conceit, and set loose the passions, of many a young man in our institutions of learning; and produce extensively a ruinous infection in the whole intellectual atmosphere, not sparing even the theological school, the ministerial study, or the Christian pulpit."—(Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. VIII., pp. 508—512.)

LECTURE II.

CAUSES OF SCEPTICISM.

TRUTH is the reality of things. It is natural as it respects the material world, and moral as it respects mind, accountability, and moral government. Our knowledge of truth is by consciousness, intuition, the senses, and evidence.

Consciousness is the mind's recognition of its own being, powers, and actions.

Intuition is the mind's perception of obvious primary truths, which are the elements of demonstration, such as, that every effect must have a cause, and that the sum of the parts is equal to the whole. It is intuition which constitutes the premises of demonstration, the primary truths being seen by the mind, and each step in the process also being a matter of intuition, or mental perception.

The reports of the senses are called knowledge, because they so uniformly correspond with the reality of things that occasional aberration occasions no distrust, but rather confirms the general rule.

There is a yet wider field of knowledge, which lies without the sphere of consciousness, and beyond the range of intuition and the cognizance of the senses, the realities of which are certified to us by evidence; and the confidence produced is called *belief.*

The evidence which sustains belief is either the evidence of human testimony, or the accumulation of probabilities from the

uniform operation of the laws of nature. This last evidence rests on the self-evident proposition, that no effect can exist without a cause. We judge, from the supposition of a stated order of cause and effect, that what has been and is will continue to be; where there is no perceived cause of change: and this belief rises from faint probability to moral certainty, according to the frequency and uniformity of the effects produced. Had the sun never risen before to-day, the evidence of its rising to-morrow would be no greater than the appearance of a meteor in the sky would be of its return. But, had the meteor appeared as uniformly as the sun has appeared, the evidence in both cases would be equal, of a stated order of cause and effect.

The difference between demonstration and moral certainty is, that in one case the mind sees the objects of comparison, and sees the result, which, of course, is knowledge; but, in the other, derives its confidence from the perception of probabilities multiplying till they produce confidence, or moral certainty. On the whole, consciousness, intuition, the senses, the evidence of testimony, and analogy, all rest on the supposition that things are as they seem to be, and will continue to manifest the same attributes and results.

Scepticism is a state of mind in which these constitutional grounds of certainty fail to produce confidence. Sometimes the evidence does not satisfy the mind in respect to its sufficiency; and, in other cases, where the argument seems to be intellectually conclusive, it fails to produce any corresponding sense of the reality and certainty of the things proved. Sometimes, in cases of mental alienation, confidence is suspended, and men doubt their own being, or personal identity. When it respects intuition, demonstration loses its power. When the senses are distrusted, experimental knowledge fails.

Instances are not uncommon, in which persons have supposed themselves, or their friends, to have become some other person; and I have just read of a gentleman, who, for two years past, has refused to leave his dwelling, from the full persuasion that he is a tea-pot, and should endanger so frail a vessel by an unrestrained intercourse with external objects.

It is the field of moral government, however, and accountability, over which the mist of darkness is apt especially to gather, and doubts to settle down. For here the temptation to doubt is greatly enhanced by sinful character and its liabilities; and the facilities of perversion and distrust, from the nature of the evidence, are proportionably multiplied.

It is scepticism in relation to the being and government of God, and our relations to it as accountable subjects, as disclosed in the Bible, which will constitute the subject of this lecture.

I employ the term Scepticism in preference to the terms Atheism, Infidelity, and Heresy, because these are more invidious, and because scepticism marks more accurately the state of this entire class of minds. In fact, there are few who positively disbelieve the being of God, or the inspiration of the Bible. To doubt is commonly the extent of human attainment, in throwing off reluctant responsibility to the government of God. The Atheist does not know that there is no God. He merely does not believe it, and doubts. The Deist does not disbelieve the inspiration of the Bible. He is merely not convinced that it is true, and doubts. Those who reject the received doctrines of the Bible do not fully disbelieve them. They fear often that they are true,— hope earnestly that they are not,— and doubt.

The present is eminently an age of scepticism throughout the world. Pagans are becoming sceptical in respect to their

ancient systems, Mahometans are beginning to distrust their ancient Prophet, and Papists to distrust the infallibility of His Holiness, and the Church. And Protestants, instead of taking things upon trust, are, with increased determination, appealing from the decisions of men; and even sceptics themselves are beginning to doubt, whether, in their sceptical wanderings, they have not got out of the way, and may not be in danger of being lost.

Whenever an epidemic sweeps over the world, we take it for granted that there is some universal cause; and, on the same principles, when we witness the wide-spread aberration of mind on the subject of evidence, we conclude that there are some causes of corresponding extent and power which produce the result.

It will be the object of this lecture to develop some of the causes of this mental phenomenon, as respects the being of God, the inspiration of the Bible, and the exposition of some of its doctrines.

1. Undoubtedly, the generic cause, without which all others would be powerless, is to be sought in the alienation of man from God, and his deep aversion to the responsibilities of his perfect and eternal government. It might not at first be supposed that a perfect government, consulting wisely and benevolently the highest good of every subject, could be an object of aversion; and to loyal minds it would not be; but to the disloyal its very perfection and stability are its terrific attributes. An attempt to execute strictly the laws of the land, on all points, would create a revolution,—not because the laws are not good, but because men are evil. And it is because God is good, and men are evil, that they are averse to responsibility, and seek to alleviate their fears by the interposition of uncertainty and doubt. They are

willingly negligent of the acquisition of evidence, and slow of heart to believe what is proved, and dexterous, by inattention, to throw the testimony into a quick oblivion, and perpetuate around them a sceptical and unrealizing state of mind.

2. The great perversion of Christianity during the dark ages, by the downfall of the Roman empire, the incursion of the northern barbarians, and the extinction of civil and religious liberty, has been, from age to age, a source of prejudice against Christianity, and a fruitful cause of declamation and scepticism.

During the midnight which settled down upon the world by the extinction of science and religion, the feudal system arose, which lies at the foundation of that inequality of rank and property which characterizes and curses modern Europe. To perpetuate this unjust monopoly, the state gave its protection to the church, and the church gave its terrific power to the state, until at length the church became the ascendant power, and ruled the world with a rod of iron. Under this ecclesiastical despotism, the nations of the civilized world groaned, and travailed in pain, a thousand years.

During this long night, liberty, and virtue, and vigorous enterprise, slept in chains, and were punished as felons; while no debasement, or impurity, or fraud, or cruelty, which human ingenuity could invent, or human power execute, was unpractised. These abominations of ecclesiastical despotism have brought upon Christianity an odium, and surrounded the system with a jealousy, which the Protestant Reformation, and the restoration of civil and religious liberty, have not been able wholly to wipe away. And, to this day, the disciples of those who achieved this illustrious emancipation are involved in the odium against Christianity created by the priesthood

whose horrid despotism their great predecessors were employed to overthrow.

3. The anti-christian conspiracy, the long-delayed but terrific result of perverted Christianity, has given a new impulse to the cause of scepticism.

The revival of letters at the Reformation, which emancipated half Europe, produced so much light in countries where ecclesiastical dominion still maintained its empire, as rendered the darkness visible and intolerable, and produced, first, Deism, and at length Atheism, and the French Revolution. For more than half a century, the conspirators attempted, by argument and ridicule, to emancipate the people from the power of superstition and the priesthood, and the prostituted energies of civil government, until they came to the conclusion that, while irresponsible men were permitted to wield the sanctions of Christianity, there could be no liberty; and that there was no way to emancipate the nation, but to obliterate all belief in the being of God and the Bible, and to sweep away every vestige of Christianity. And this they systematically attempted, and most thoroughly accomplished, by falsehood, by ridicule, and by argument, until, aided by the corruptions of the reigning system, they succeeded in obliterating from the mind of a nation all traces of belief in the being of God, and a future state.

The explosion was terrific. It seemed, for a time, to suspend the entire action of the divine government, and overturned thrones and altars: but it blew to atoms, also, the conspirators, and all their chimerical hopes. It was like the uncapping of a volcano, whose fires rolled one continuous sheet of desolation over all. It was amid voices, and thunderings, and a mighty earthquake, that the tremendous system fell.

But, though the effort failed to overthrow the government

of God, and the world has been warned of the terrors which await an atheistical political millennium, their specious writings still remain, to pervert those who have forgotten their results. There is in them no great profundity of talent, or ground of confidence; but there is in them the best possible adaptation to unhinge and unsettle mind; and whoever reads them with implicit confidence will be subverted. Charged with ridicule, like the poisoned arrow, they inflict a double death: by the stroke, they destroy; and, to make assurance doubly sure, by the venom which they throw into their system, they destroy.

4. The attempt to repress scepticism by authority, and the odium of hard names, has served rather to augment than to stay the malady.

It is not the plan of Heaven, that truths which lie within the sphere of evidence should be obtained without mental effort. Acquisition by investigation, and delight in action, is a part of the mind's everlasting employment and blessedness. Men ought to think for themselves, as really as they ought to eat for themselves; and if, to prevent infidelity, you repress investigation, you may have uniformity, indeed, but it will be that of vacant minds. You may avert storms, but it will be to secure stagnation and putrefaction.

It is not true, however, that free and independent thought tends to infidelity. There always have been minds, and there always will be, who will not submit to dictation, or tamely commit to memory other men's opinions; and it is such men to whom the Reformation owed its birth, and from whom the Bible has received its most able defence. And if, as incident to such high action, there should be some who sometimes miss the mark, they are not to be treated as outlaws. You may intimidate the abject in this manner, but assuredly you will raise up around the church an army of powerful, embittered assailants, to

make reprisals, by the subversion of her sons. No doubt men are accountable to God for their dangerous errors, and their mischievous tendency may properly be exposed; but it should be done in the language of compassion towards them that are out of the way, and not in the language of contempt and vituperation.

5. It is not uncommon for men to mistake their feelings of unreconciled aversion to truth for lack of evidence.

We are not satisfied, they say. We are not convinced. We are ready to believe, when the evidence is sufficient. But the whole secret is, that they are not pleased. To the disobedient, law always appears unreasonable. The entire anti-social conspiracy of thieves, robbers, burglars, pickpockets, and swindlers, look upon our laws and institutions with aversion, and are deeply prejudiced and virulent in their opposition. They regard separate property, and government, as a usurpation, and their own disgrace and exile as an unreasonable persecution. And thus, and for the same reasons, do sinful men feel towards the government of God; and they call that insufficient evidence which fails to remove the discontented feeling.

6. Another fruitful cause of scepticism is found in the supposed irresponsibility of man for his opinions.

For that which is constitutional, instinctive, and unmodified by volition, doubtless we are not accountable. And, if opinion were formed without the modifying influence of the heart, the maxim might be just. But it is not so. There is no place where passion, prejudice, interest, and aversion, have more power. It is the will which sends out to summon the witnesses, on one side only, or on both, as it shall decide, — which shuts the eye, and stops the ear, and suspends the recording pen, and is all awake, *currente calamo*, when the

side testifies which favors inclination. It is the will which writes the testimony upon sand, or upon brass, as it favors or offends. It is the will, the busy dexterity of an evil heart, which gathers up and piles into the scales all the specious arguments which favor inclination, and keeps out the arguments which would turn them against predominant desire: — and when the light is too overpowering to render an erroneous verdict possible, men see, as in a glass, the truth, and straightway, from inattention, willingly forget its image and superscription, and even where conviction maintains its empire, move the tongue in opposition to the better judgment.

Such being the meddling and powerful dexterity of the heart, it needs powerful responsibility to bind it to good behavior. Among holy beings, responsibility is the guardian of virtuous action. Nothing in heaven thrives without it; and on earth, among alienated subjects, its cessation is desperate licentiousness. How can it be expected that men will toil through extended investigations, and hold the balance even against fear, and diversions of interest or passion, without motive? As well might morality be reconciled with total irresponsibility of action, as an enlightened and correct belief.

7. The demand of evidence on moral subjects, which the nature of mind renders impossible, is another cause of scepticism.

Why, it is said, could not God make unbelief impossible, as in consciousness and demonstration? Because the truths to be proved lie beyond the limits of consciousness, or the scope of the mind's intuition, or the cognizance of the senses. Who can demonstrate the history of the American Revolution, the adoption of the constitution, or its correct exposition? The great business of life is guided by experiment, analogy, and testimony; and though it admits of moral certainty, it

admits of prejudice, and folly, and wilful evasion. Let one of these philosophers put in practice his own maxim, and we shall perceive his folly. He sends for his physician: — "Sir, can you demonstrate that I am sick, and what ails me, and what will cure me?" "Not exactly; but I perceive symptoms of indisposition upon you. I know, by observation, what disease they indicate; and, by experience, I have ascertained the remedy." "None of your quackery! — I am not a man to be imposed upon! Demonstrate to me that I am sick, and what ails me, and what will cure me, or I have no further occasion for your services." He sends for his merchant: — "But first I wish to be certified of the correctness of your charges. Can you demonstrate that these articles were taken?" "I can prove it by satisfactory evidence." "I shall not be satisfied by any evidence but demonstration." He sends for his attorney: — "I think it probable that I may soon leave this loose-jointed world. Can you inform me how I can demonstrate my last will and testament in favor of my beloved wife and children?" "Indeed, sir, I cannot." "Then, pettifogger, leave me, as I hope soon to leave this world of visions and of doubts!"

8. The pushing of investigation, without first principles, competent instruction, and study, is a fruitful cause of scepticism. The dependence of high and sublime truths on those which are obvious is such, that no man who neglects the elements of knowledge can possibly unlock and enter her secret chambers. What mind can reach the depths of the mathematics, the heights of astronomy, or the secrets of chemistry, without attending to the alphabet of these sciences? What progress has ever been made by man in knowledge, but as theories have been abandoned, and intuition, and experience, and evidence, made the basis of knowledge? — and yet, without lamp,

compass, or chart, or study, men plunge into the profound of theology, and grope, and rend and involve the subject, until desperation or despondency puts an end to their fruitless labor, in a state of scepticism. It is a law of Heaven, that men shall acquire knowledge on all subjects, in the first instance, by instruction, and careful, persevering mental application. But sceptical men insist on being self-taught, and that, also, without the tax of patient mental application.

9. The pushing of investigation beyond the boundaries of knowledge is a frequent cause of discouragement and scepticism; going beyond the sphere of consciousness, or of intuition, or of the senses, into the territories of theory, and twilight, and conjecture. These, often, are men of vigorous minds and impatient desire; and, comet-like, launch forth in their fiery career: but, having gone beyond the centripetal attractions of the moral universe, they fall by their own density, and flounder amid the bogs and quagmires of chaos and old night; or, like the adventurous navigator, they launch out on an unknown sea, tempest-tossed and not comforted, ever dreaming that some land is near, and straining their sightless eyeballs upon darkness, in the constant expectation of the bursting out of some great light, — to whom is still reserved the blackness of darkness. For, though their strength were equal to that of Polyphemus, it is exerted, without vision, in smiting upon the waters, to raise a mist about their own heads.

10. The society of sceptical men, who are scoffers and partisans in the warfare against Christianity, is a powerful cause of scepticism.

All whose confidence in the Bible falters, are not scoffers. Many venerate Christianity, and would by no means impair its influence on other minds, who feel, and sometimes lament,

the unsettled condition of their own. But there are men who are inflamed with the madness of unbelief, and who associate and systematize their efforts to undermine the confidence of the community in Christianity; and, to the young who fall under their influence, their words of scorn are terrific as batteries, contagious as the plague, corrosive as canker, and deadly as poison. In their associations they assail the inexperienced with false statements which they are not able to contradict, with sophistry which they cannot detect, with objections which they cannot answer, and with blasphemies, made eloquent by the inspiration of the bowl, which amaze and confound them. The den of lions, and the retreat of adders and vipers, are not more perilous to life than these evil communications are to a sound mind and confidence in evidence.

Philosophy is the nature which God has given to things, as perceived by the human mind; to matter and to mind, in the endless relations of cause and effect, motive and choice. And, so far as the properties and laws of created things lie within the cognizance of our faculties, they constitute the material of all knowledge, and of all experience.

The Bible itself, while it never professedly teaches, always assumes, and never contradicts, the true philosophy of things. When it describes things as they appear to the eye, the appearance corresponds with the description; when it assumes the nature, or attributes, or relations and consequences of things, observation verifies always the accuracy of the assumption. It cannot be interpreted without it, and cannot be explained in opposition to it. Indeed, the interpretation of language, as figurative or literal, turns on the known properties of the subjects spoken of; and, of several meanings possible, the nature of the subject decides the selection.

The difficulty in the primitive age, and ever since, has been, that false philosophy has been interpolated in nature's book, and the attempt pertinaciously made to accommodate the Bible to those facts which never happened, and to make those theoretical apparitions the expositions of truth; — a process which has kept torture upon Holy Writ, and an earthquake in the church, to this day; and never will the river of the water of life run pure, and copious, and irresistible, extending universal life in its course, till all the interpolations of a false philosophy are blotted out from nature's page, and rent from the system of interpretation, and thrown away.

11. With these remarks in view, I proceed to observe, that the creeds of the Reformation are often made the occasion of perplexity and doubt to inexperienced minds.

They contain, unquestionably, the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and they have stood through ages, against the encroachments of error, as the iron-bound shores to the ocean. But they were constructed amidst the most arduous controversy that ever taxed the energies of man, and with the eye fixed upon the errors of the day, and on the points around which the battle chiefly raged. On some topics they are more full than the proportion of the faith now demands; some of their phraseology also, once familiar, would now, without explanation, inculcate sentiments which are not scriptural, which the framers did not believe, and the creeds were never intended to teach. They present also the results of investigations, without giving to the reader the intervening steps, without which, minds not favored with leisure and undisciplined by study could not easily arrive at the conclusions.

Of course, they appear rather as insulated, independent,

abstract propositions, than as the symmetrical parts and proportions of a beautiful and glorious system of divine legislation, for maintaining the laws and protecting the rights of the universe, while the alienated are reconciled and the guilty are pardoned; and though, as abstract truths correctly expounded according to the intention of the framers, they unquestionably inculcate the system of doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures; and though, as land-marks and boundaries between truth and error, they are truly important,—yet, as the means for the popular exposition and the saving application of truth, they are far short of the exigencies of the day in which we live; mere skeletons of truth, compared with the system clothed and beautified, and inspired with life, as it exists and operates in the word of God. Unhappily, also, some of the most important truths they inculcate are, in their exposition, so twisted in with the reigning philosophy of the day, as to be, in the popular apprehension, identified with it; and are made odious and repellent by its errors, as if these philosophical theories were the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. There is no end to the mischief which false philosophy, employed in the exposition and defence of the doctrines of the Reformation, has in this manner accomplished. Good men have contended for theories, as if they were vital to the system, and regarded as heretical those who received the doctrine of the Bible, and only rejected their philosophy. They have cried out against and renounced philosophizing, when it was their own philosophizing which divided and agitated the church. In this manner, the church has been filled with controversies, and feuds, and jealousies; and intelligent men, offended alike by absurd philosophy and unchristian controversies about it, have, in the conflict of opinion, become discouraged and disgusted, and have either adopted heretical

opinions or become sceptical. It is my deliberate opinion, that the false philosophy which has been employed for the exposition of the Calvinistic system, has done more to obstruct the march of Christianity, and to paralyze the saving power of the Gospel, and to raise up and organize around the church the unnumbered multitude to behold, and wonder, and despise, and perish, than all other causes beside. There is no subject which so moves my compassion, or fills my soul with regret, or my heart with the feeling, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

Nor is it to be expected that the Gospel will ever be attended with its primitive power in sudden and numberless conversions, till it is again, as it then was, preached in demonstration of the spirit and of power, unobstructed by the clouds and darkness of a false philosophy. The points especially affected by this philosophy are vital to the principles of moral government, and involve the constitutional perceptions of truth, the universal dictates of common sense, and the unequivocal elements of accountability, as recognized in human government, as sanctioned in the Bible, and as employed by the Holy Spirit in convincing men of sin, and of God's justice in their condemnation. If the theories of this philosophy are not absurd, nothing is absurd; and if they are not false, nothing is false; and if, according to them, the conduct of God is not indefensible and unjust, it is only because what God does is right, simply and only because he does it, and therefore nothing which he does can be unjust.

The points to which I allude, as violated by a false philosophy, are, the principles of personal identity,— by which the posterity of Adam are distinct from, and not to be confounded with, their ancestor; the principles of personal accountability

and desert of punishment,— that men are not made accountable and punishable for the conduct of Adam, though liable to sin and misery, as its universal consequence; the nature of sin and of holiness, considered not as material qualities or the substance of the soul, or as instincts, but as the spontaneous action of mind under moral government, in the full possession of all the elements of accountability; and, above all, the doctrine of the decrees of God, and the universal certainty of all events to his fore-knowledge: to which may be added, the nature of the atonement and its extent, and the doctrines of election and reprobation as they shine in the Bible, and not through the medium of a perverting philosophy.

Whatever of these philosophical theories appertained to the system during the arduous conflict for civil and religious liberty against the Papal despotism of modern Europe, men endured,— even swallowed them unhesitatingly, almost unthinkingly, in the presence of a greater evil; but, since the conflict has passed away, and the nature of mind and moral government is better understood, and the numbers who think and will think for themselves multiply, the repugnance to this false philosophy has steadily increased, and will increase, till that which is adventitious and false is relinquished, and the truth is preached in its purity and unbroken power.

12. These evils of philosophy have, however, been greatly aggravated by the caricatures of Calvinism, which, on all sides, have been multiplied.

I have never seen or heard a correct statement of the Calvinistic system from an opponent. Consult almost any oracle of opposition as to what is Calvinism, and the response will be, Calvinism is that horrible system which teaches that God has foreordained and fixed, by irresistible omnipotence,

whatsoever comes to pass; that he has made a very small number of mankind on purpose to be saved, and all the rest on purpose to damn them; that an atonement by weight and measure has been made for the elect only, but which is offered to the non-elect on conditions impossible to be complied with, and they are damned for not accepting what did not belong to them, and could not have saved them if they had received it; and that infants, as well as adults, are included in the decree of reprobation,—and that hell, no doubt, is paved with their bones.

It is needless to say that falsehoods more absolute and entire were never stereotyped in the foundery of the father of lies, or with greater industry worked off for gratuitous distribution from age to age.

13. False conceptions of the nature and prerogatives of reason, have been another abundant cause of confusion and scepticism.

Reason, considered as a faculty, is the mind itself acting upon evidence and moral fitness; and that is *reasonable* which the mind perceives to be conformed to some acknowledged standard of truth or rectitude.

In the presence of competent testimony, belief is reasonable; in natural philosophy, whatever accords with the laws of matter is reasonable; in moral government and theology, whatever accords with the nature of mind and free agency, and the principles of law and moral government, is reasonable; and in relation to the comprehensive purposes of God, that plan is reasonable which will best develop his power and wisdom and goodness in the creation and government of the intelligent universe.

While correct conceptions of reason, as a faculty, prevail, and a correct standard of what is reasonable is maintained,

the decisions of the mind within the sphere of its competency may be relied on, and the maxim, that nothing is to be believed which is contrary to reason, is true,—meaning only, that nothing is to be believed which contradicts our consciousness or our intuition or our senses, or without evidence, or which is contrary to the known laws of the natural or moral world, or to those principles of order which God himself has rendered too obvious to be mistaken or controverted.

But the fact is, that loose and incorrect conceptions of reason, as a faculty of mind, prevail, and also concerning what is the external standard of what is reasonable and unreasonable.

By some, reason is deified, and clothed with a sort of unerring omniscient intuition, in respect to all sorts of matters and things. So that one of these sagacious philosophers has only to turn his sapient eye on any subject whatever, and, however recondite and profound it may be, he sees, with the slightest glance, what is reasonable about it, and what is absurd, and can settle it instantly, with oracular certainty.

Others regard reason as a sort of moral instinct, which decides by feeling instead of eyesight, and exercises on all points an unerring discrimination.

But, as to the last popular import of the term reasonable, that is, sometimes, what accords with the preconceived opinions of men,— with what it seems to them most suitable and proper that God should do,— and sometimes, it is that which corresponds with their wishes, and sits pleasantly on their feelings. Now, when such vague and false conceptions are formed of the attributes and capacities of reason, in the utter absence of all correct and definite standards of comparison, and in that outer darkness to which presumptuous men push their speculations

where God reigns alone, and asks no counsel, and gives no account of his matters, is it wonderful that men become bewildered, confounded, wearied, discouraged, and at length sceptical, from the supposed impossibility of knowing anything? When they explore the Bible, and analyze the conduct of God, with such false conceptions, it is not wonderful that what they meet with does not correspond with their preconceived opinions, or with their wishes, or with their feelings; and that they should be offended, and perplexed, and, in despondency and vexation, give up the knowledge of the truth, as something which cannot be obtained.

14. The liberty which some nominal Christians have taken with the inspiration and exposition of the Bible, has tended powerfully to undermine their own and the public confidence in the book.

Having decided by *reason* what the Bible *ought* to mean, they have attempted to make its stubborn dialect conform, and to stop its mouth where it would speak amiss, or by the rack to compel it to prophesy deceits, and — where all this will not avail — to lop off with the knife the incorrigible passages. But, by the time this torturing, pruning process is ended, there is little left which the experimenter himself believes, and but little confidence in that which he affects to believe. When it has been once assumed that the Old Testament is obsolete, and filled with unworthy conceptions of God, and dangerous errors; that certain portions of the New Testament are spurious, and others mistranslated; that many of the epistles are of doubtful authority, and none of them so guarded by inspiration as to exclude false reasoning, allegorizings, and mysticism, and accommodations to the errors and prejudices of the age; that even the gospels are not a revelation, but merely a history of one, which uninspired men

wrote down as well as they could remember, but with less ability than Cicero or Socrates would have done it,—they are prepared for the conclusion, that there is no revelation, and that reason is man's only guide; that there is *some truth* in the Bible which was once revealed, which lies somewhere amid the rubbish of ages, and the confusion of mistake; but what it is, and where it is, reason must decide, taking up the particles of truth by its own attraction, as the magnet extracts iron from the sand. No other book could sustain its character for truth under such treatment; no other book written by men of common sense was ever regarded as being thus incapable of definite exposition. Such uncertainty thrown upon human legislation would destroy utterly the power of civil governments. Were it announced from the bar and the bench that the obvious import of the statute-book is not the true import; that more than half of it is obsolete, and filled with false principles of law; that, in the best parts, some enactments are interpolations, and others borrowed from dead languages mistranslated; that none of them are the laws of the state, but the mere *history* of laws, passed ages ago, which the bystanders *heard* enacted, and wrote down for our use according to the best of their recollection, with fewer means of accuracy than the reporters of parliamentary or congressional debates; that they have sent down to us many wise and some foolish laws, which need to be modified in accommodation to the altered state of society; and that, in discriminating between what is obsolete, and interpolated, and misremembered, and mistranslated, and what is genuine and obligatory, the bench, and the jury, and the people, must judge for themselves,—following the dictates of their own reason,—could the statute-book, with no more definiteness and authority, defend us against the innovations of the anti-

social system? And can the Bible, as Heaven's law-book, be treated thus, and continue to be "the law of the Lord, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord, which is pure, making wise the simple,"—"the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation"? Can such loose and low opinions of the Bible be thrown out upon the community, and not subtract from the reverence and the confidence which is indispensable to render it the efficient legislation of Heaven? The results of this practice have corresponded with its tendencies. In Germany, it has brought commentator and reader to the frank, unqualified denial of the inspiration of the Bible; and in this country the same treatment of the Bible has already produced, and is producing, the same results.

15. Another occasion of scepticism is the confounding of the physical and moral power of God.

Physical omnipotence is the capacity of God to do whatever is, in the nature of things, possible to be done by direct power.

Moral omnipotence is the capacity of God to do, by laws and moral influence, whatever is consistent with the nature of mind, of free agency, accountability, and moral government.

He did not so make the solar system, as that its government, by the ten commandments, should be a possible thing; or so constitute the mind, as that choice and accountability should, by any possibility, be the result of a direct, irresistible omnipotence. But multitudes confound this distinction, and apply the attributes of physical omnipotence to the government of mind, and, thus drawing inferences against the Bible, attempt to explain away its unbending orthodoxy. Why, they say, if faith is necessary, does not God make men

believe? Is he not omnipotent? What need was there for an atonement? Could not God have held the heart of the universe steady, even though he had sanctified and pardoned the guilty? Is he not almighty? Does he not desire the salvation of all, and work all things after the counsel of his own will? Why, then, will not all men be saved? Who can believe that he will punish, when his power enables him just as consistently to save? They overlook the fact, that while by simple power he controls the material universe, he must act in the government of mind by laws, and motives, and moral influence, with reference to the formation and continuance of free agency, and accountability, and character; and that to assert that God can govern mind directly, as he governs matter, is to beg the question, and deny the distinction between material and moral government, and contradict the Bible, which declares that God, by the law, could not, and only through the atonement could, be just, and the justifier of him that believeth.

16. Another cause of scepticism is found in mental dissipation.

There are multitudes who think incessantly, but never make the effort to methodize and digest their thoughts. They read all sorts of books, engage in all sorts of discussions, hear all sorts of preachers, vainly hoping that, in some favored moment, truth personified will stand before them. But, as she does not appear, they let the heterogeneous mass float in upon and oppress the mind, as undigested aliment does the stomach, till fumes and debility ensue. No wonder they cannot believe anything. The animal who could not eat between two equal attractions of appetite, and at length gorged himself by eating everything within his reach, would not be in a more pitiable condition.

17. The union of church and state in Protestant nations has been a fruitful cause of scepticism.

It was the result of an order of things which the reformers could not change; which, though it sometimes aided, hindered, more than it helped, the cause of pure religion, while to religious liberty it gave little besides the name.

It was this unhallowed alliance with the state which withdrew the eye and the heart from the protection of Heaven, to rely on an arm of flesh, and from the doctrines of Heaven to the commandments of men, and which filled up the church with professors by subscriptions to creeds and conformity to ceremonies, without the evangelical qualifications of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. In this bad alliance, the Sabbath was profaned, and a lax morality prevailed within the sacred enclosures of the church, and discipline was neglected, and crimes tolerated, in high places and low; while the right of presentation to the ministry by the king and nobility, rendered the ministry a sinecure, and filled it, not unfrequently, with ignorant, vicious, and heretical men.

This preposterous exhibition of religion in alliance with the world, obscured her glory, destroyed her purity, and broke her power, and emancipated men from the dominion of Christianity, to fall back upon scepticism and infidelity.

In this country, we have indeed no union of church and state; and yet we have not escaped entirely the amalgamation of the church and the world. Just in proportion as, on principles of superstition, or formality, or policy, men without holiness are recognized as members of the church of Christ, the same results will follow: a lax observance of the Sabbath, a loose morality and formal worship, antinomian fatality, or Arminian laxity of doctrine, both of which alike

grieve the Spirit, and abandon man to his own heart's lust. It was this amalgamation of the church with the world, in New England, by a profession without evidence of piety, that stopped, for seventy years, those revivals with which the colonies commenced, and which began again only with the restoration of the scriptural tenure of membership, by a credible profession of holiness. It was this amalgamation which brought unconverted men into the ministry, and introduced first a lax Calvinism, and then Arminianism, and then Arianism, and after that Socinianism, till at length scepticism became the predominant cast of those who were not professedly evangelical.

The attempt making by some to annihilate the distinction of church and congregation among nominal Christians, and to comprehend in one charitable fellowship entire towns, parishes, or congregations, is one of the most efficient methods which could be devised for putting out the light and paralyzing the power of the Gospel, and filling the land with sceptics and infidels.

The way to prevent infidelity is not to unspiritualize Christianity, and make it simply a religion of forms and movable terms, so accommodating that unholy men shall find neither reproof nor repellency; not, so to bring down the church, and its doctrines and discipline, that infidels may find themselves well qualified and acceptable brethren, without any change of sentiment or practice.

Men of sense despise such temporizing policy. They know that religion is either a matter of vast magnitude or nothing; and since these teachers reduce it so nearly to a cipher, they choose to go for the whole, and regard it all as a fable.

If you search the congregations of the whole nation, you will find scepticism to predominate most in those places where

the claims and sanctions of the Gospel have been brought down the lowest, and the difference between Christian and infidel so narrowed down, that, in the conjunction, it would be difficult to decide whether Christianity had been converted to infidelity, or infidelity to Christianity.

18. Not a few are rendered sceptical by the protracted habit of believing the truth without obeying it.

The snares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, spring up, and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. In this condition of unproductive hearing, while the world rises in relative estimation, the concerns of eternity recede and disappear. The result is a growing insensibility of mind to evidence. The being of God, and the inspiration of the Bible, and the realities of the eternal state, though certified by evidence more luminous and powerful than ever was concentrated on any other subject, assume the position of believed but unrealized truths, like those distant orbs of heaven whose light, as yet, has not reached the earth. The man has a respect for religion, and its institutions; and, under the power of conscience, there is at times solemnity, and impression, and many good wishes, and half-formed resolutions, and earnest desires, and sad regrets, and many fears, and many hopes of being and doing better. But this, at length, becomes an irksome state. The wane of life, and the approaching shades of evening, warn the subject that his days are almost numbered, and that eternity is near. He would prefer becoming a Christian by regeneration, if he thought he could; but begins to fear that he never shall; wishes there might be some other way, hopes there may be, and begins to look around with exploring eye, to see if there is not. And immediately, as eagles gather about the slain, temptations gather about the ruined man, and volunteer their

aid. And now the truth, heard before with patience, begins to become irksome and painful, and he hears with the reäction of excited sensibility. He believes, to be sure; but then the doctrines are preached too much, or with too much terror, or too much earnestness, or too much severity, or personality of reference. He wishes that ministers would preach the relative duties more, and the doctrines less. Still, it is slowly that education, and conscience, and habit, let go. In times of peril, and of quickened attention to religion, conscience awakes, and drives out the intrusions of doubt, and shakes his soul with salutary fear. He trembles, relents, and is almost persuaded to become a Christian; but the elastic cord which binds him only yields to the pressure, but does not break; and, when the momentary effort has passed by, returns to its strength. And now the alternative becomes imperious of meeting or disbelieving the terrors of the future state; and finally he determines, if possible, to disbelieve. A large proportion of the virulent opponents of evangelical doctrine and the Bible, are men who were once nominal believers, and had, at some period of their life, been seriously awakened about the concerns of their souls, until despondency, and guilt, and fear, made them sceptics.

19. Undefined and unworthy conceptions of experimental religion, as associated with the weaknesses and extravagances of indiscreet and fanatical good men, are the occasions of uncertainty and doubt to many minds.

I do not regard as fanaticism a sudden and deep sense of guilt and danger, falling upon many minds at the same time, and followed speedily with filial sorrow for sin, and affectionate reliance on the Saviour, and a life subsequently consecrated to his service. I have reference to great excitement where there is little knowledge; to excessive, unregulated,

tumultuous feeling,—superseding discretion, and enlisting the animal susceptibilities, and nervous excitement, and spiritual pride,— regardless alike of scriptural restraint, and the decorum of civilized social intercourse. When such whirlwinds of wildfire break out among wood, and hay, and stubble, it is called by some a revival of religion; but, though there should be some religion amid the vast disorder, I call it fanaticism, and the real religion of it is like a few kernels of wheat amid mountains of chaff, set on fire and blown about by furious winds. It is owing to such excesses, that lasting associations of odium are attached to revivals, even where no such exhibitions are witnessed, and where the effects are pure and undefiled religion.

20. Another cause of scepticism is found in dissolute habits.

The process is short and obvious. The conflict between the man's practice and his conscience is too severe to be permanently endured. One or the other must conform, or there can be no peace. To relinquish his guilty pleasures and sinful ways, he is not prepared. These he will not give up, and therefore his only alternative is to deceive himself, and still his conscience by false testimony. This commonly is attempted, at first, by an endeavor so to expound the Bible as that it shall speak peace to the wicked. But it is formed of such unbending materials, that, though bent out of the way, like the elastic bow, it flies back the moment the constraining force relaxes. If wrested, it requires too much watching, and holding wrong, to consist with convenience and comfort; for though, with great effort, it may be stretched upon the rack, and compelled to prophesy peace to the wicked, no sooner are the engines of torture relaxed, than it thunders out again, "There is no peace, saith

my God, to the wicked." The Bible, therefore, to a vicious man, is a most terrific book; with all he can do, and with all the help he can obtain to explain it away, it keeps him in constant alarm: like the fires of a volcano, it burns fiercely beneath his feet, and keeps up a dreadful sound in his ears, and shakes his soul with reiterated and unsubdued alarms, until, in weariness, and vexation, and desperation, he turns furiously, and rushes, *vi et armis*, upon his unrelenting tormentor. And now he stands erect, and sets his mouth against the heavens, and his foot on all which is pure and holy; and calls it emancipation, and the triumph of reason over education, and superstition, and priestcraft.

Before the epidemic of infidelity passed over our land, nearly all the vicious were condemned to do penance for their crimes, by a nominal belief in Christianity, and the retributions of a future state; but since that event, nearly every man and woman of dissolute habits has secretly or openly renounced the Bible, and joined the sceptical caste. One illustration of this kind may stand for thousands. A youth, religiously educated, comes, in quest of employment, from the country to one of our great cities. His principles are unperverted, his breath is pure, his morals are uncorrupt, his conscience is tender, and all his habits are good. But he is a stranger; and, in his vacant moments, far from parents and friends, is solitary. He falls, at length, into the society of amiable, polite, and courteous young men; but, alas! adepts in the wiles of temptation, and the practices of evil, they spread the snare for his feet, and dig the pit for his downfall. At first, he is shocked, and recoils; and they, nothing daunted, renew their assiduities, and let fall upon his ear their sympathy for his faintness of

heart and superstitious fears. Their sophistry and cavils distil as dew upon him, and their sarcasm eateth as doth a canker. By little and little, his heart receives the shock with less repellency; and, as he sees that they eat and do not die, and hears them boasting of their liberty, the young unhallowed desire begins to rise in his bosom; and, as conscience falters, and his fears subside, in evil hour he consents to the enticement, and is undone. Still, for a season, a wounded conscience pains him, and he passes sleepless nights and days of woe. "O, that I had never left the abodes of purity, and come to this guilty city! O, that I had resisted and burst away, when I faltered and was almost persuaded to do so! O, my mother! what wouldst thou say, didst thou know what thy son is doing? O, my sister, didst thou see what thy brother has become, how would thy pure heart bleed!" But the net is upon him, and he struggles only to draw closer the toils about him. The stream is rolling on with a broader, deeper tide, which he resists with a feebler arm, till, in desperation, resistance ceases, and he goes downward in the full career of augmenting crime. At length, his guilty pleasures surpass his income, and, to meet the deficiency, he borrows of his employer. Yes, he borrows,—without leave, indeed,—but to repay; and borrows again, and repeats the loan, till repayment becomes impossible; and at length detection and shame burst upon him. And now his character is gone, his prospects in life are blasted, and he becomes misanthropic and desperate. He will not reform, and he cannot endure the hell which the truth believed kindles in his bosom, and resolves to bury his wretchedness in the ruins of his faith. He calls to his aid Hume, and Paine, and Volney, and Voltaire, and Owen, and Wright, and becomes a sceptic; and between the gambling-table and the brothel, and the

midnight enterprises of the anti-social band and the jail, he spends his days; till at length the hand of justice overtakes him, and he dies in a halter.

21. I will only add, that implicit confidence in great and learned men who have been unbelievers, is a frequent cause of scepticism.

For, though there is no class of men who boast more of free and independent thought than sceptics, there are, in fact, few men who think less, or rely with a more tame, implicit, unthinking confidence on the opinion of others. They assume that these great men have examined the subject thoroughly and candidly on both sides, and that where such minds have been unable to find competent evidence to rest their faith upon, it must be that there is none. But all these premises, so important to the conclusion, are assumed without evidence, and falsely. The instance is probably yet to be found, of a sceptic who had soberly, and carefully, and candidly examined both sides; who had studied the history, and design, and evidence, and exposition, of the Bible. Many who have undertaken to read it, only to find armor against it, have been cured of their scepticism; but I do not believe a well-authenticated instance can be found, of a sceptic who was a good biblical scholar, and who studied thoroughly the Bible and its evidences, and remained a sceptic. But, if it were so, it would be nothing to be relied on, while of men of great mind and learning a hundred to one read and are convinced. Great minds have also great and evil hearts, powerful passions, great vices of life, and great aversion to the truth, and violent prejudices against it, and an indomitable pride, revolting against the duty of becoming little children, that they may enter the kingdom of God. The children of our Sabbath-schools, of twelve years of age, are probably much better

acquainted with the history, and doctrines, and evidences of the Bible, than the ablest deists, who have poured forth torrents of scorn and invective against it. Nothing, therefore, is more weak, and foolish, and perilous, than the scepticism which is inspired by confidence in perverted talent, and unapplied knowledge, and the decisions of ignorance, prejudice, and hatred, against the word of God.

In respect to the remedy for scepticism, there are two courses. One is the concentration of the mind upon admitted truths, with reference to the immediate exercise of right affections.

The knowledge requisite to the exercise of the affections is far short of that which is demanded to settle all the difficulties and remove all the doubts of a speculating mind; and correct affections in view of truth are practicable, while many clouds hang over particular departments of the great subject. A man may understand and approve the vital parts of the constitution of the United States, long before he has studied and made up his mind on every particular; and his patriotic approbation of what he does understand will aid him in the study and comprehension of the rest. In like manner, when the heart shall render to God the homage of love and confidence, gratitude and obedience, in view of such exhibitions of his character, and word, and ways, as are comprehended, and entitled to affectionate confidence, three-fourths of all the speculative difficulties will pass away as the mists recede before the rising sun, and those which linger will be soon adjusted.

To accomplish this result, however, a rigid inhibition must be laid upon the habit of speculation. For the present, it must be stopped, and the whole soul be turned from the effort at knowing everything to the effort at doing the will of

God, as far as known; and to this end, the Bible should be devoutly read, with a simple reference to understanding and obeying the claims of God upon the heart. Let a careful non-intercourse be maintained with all associates who would divert your mind; bring around you the society of intelligent Christian friends; and give yourself, at stated times, daily, to retirement, the reading of the Scriptures, and fervent prayer for guidance and illumination. Attend statedly also upon the public worship of God; and be careful to avoid every practice which would do violence to your conscience, and to preserve unbroken, and with increasing vigor, all your serious mental associations; and daily, and often as the knowledge of duty breaks in upon your mind,—do it. Give to God the affections of your soul, and consecrate yourself to his service. Exercise ingenuous sorrow for your sins, and rely affectionately upon the Saviour.

The chief difficulty you will have to encounter will be the mental effort to begin, and the difficulty and irksomeness of a first attempt to fix your thoughts upon an unwelcome and long-neglected subject. It is this reluctance of the mind to give itself immediately to the subject, and the faintness of heart incident to the early stages of effort, upon which temptation concentrates its power to produce indefinite procrastination and doubt. But decision will soon be followed with augmented power of resolved purpose, with diminished resistance, and with the increased influence of the Spirit, till, by the divine blessing, you come to a calm, intelligent, delightful consecration of all your powers to him who loved you and gave himself to die for your sins.

The course here recommended is not a mere theory, but a practical prescription, often repeated, and never, to my knowledge, without auspicious results. I have known young

men of literary distinction and sceptical habits, who obtained quickly in this way permanent satisfaction, which years of discussion and mental scrutiny had failed to bestow; and veterans in sceptical debate I have known, who, by a devout communion with their own hearts and the Bible, have come into the possession of abiding confidence and tranquillity of mind. These results are doubtless an illustration of the promise, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine," and of what is meant by becoming a little child, in order to enter the kingdom of God. The man who will not obey the Gospel till he can comprehend everything which appertains to the vast system will probably never obey it; while he whose heart follows with equal steps the movements of his understanding may hope to find his path shining more and more to the perfect day.

There are, however, some minds of such a temperament, and of such inflexible habits, as may render the total inhibition of speculation extremely difficult. In such a case, while I would still urgently recommend the preceding course in respect to the devout discipline of the heart, by reading, and prayer, and efforts to feel right, there would seem to be a necessity of referring the mind also to the elementary principles of accountability and moral government. These are the pillars of the temple, without which it is but a heap of splendid ruins; and no one can be conversant with sceptical minds, and not perceive their deficiency in elementary knowledge, and exact definitions. They always include some positions at variance with the principles of moral government, and leave out principles which are indispensable to a just conception of the subject; and, like missing a figure in an arithmetical process, it vitiates the result. But, the mistake having been made, and persisted in, and incorporated in

every train of thought, is not likely to be detected by the subject alone. The aid of some intelligent friend is needed, who, in a free conversation, may point out the false assumptions, and supply the deficiencies, and put the definitions and reasonings in order; and, generally, they will move on unbiased, to a delightful result of mental satisfaction. The elementary principles of the Christian system are, like the elements of all the great works of Heaven, few, obvious, and of sublime simplicity; and I have never known them disencumbered, and fairly presented to the minds of sceptical men, without gratifying results.

These elements of theology are comprehended in just conceptions of the decrees of God, as having for their object an intelligent universe, composed of free agents, and governed by perfect laws, perfectly administered, — including the remedial system for the maintenance of law, and the reformation and forgiveness of the guilty. They are easily understood; and when these great lights in the moral heavens arise, they dispel all darkness, and perplexity, and doubt. The temptations to atheism, and fatalism, and to heresy and error, pass away; and reason, acting upon correct premises, arrives with ease and delight at consistent and satisfying results. The conscience does its office; the heart feels its accountability, and obligation, and guilt; and, by the power of truth and the Holy Spirit, the will signifies its adhesion, and the affections flow forth in those channels of benevolence and complacency which Heaven has provided for obedient minds.

It is not enough, however, that the mind, long vexed and bewildered, should be guided once only through the labyrinth out of the wilderness into the open field and the light of day. The perceptions of the way might become dim, or the memory of old associations might return, to bias and bewilder the

mind. The process should be travelled over in the society of experienced friendship, till the truth becomes familiar, till all its impressions remain, and its light shines serenely, and all the perverting associations of error fall as scales from the eyes and chains from the soul. And with such aid, where the commitment of party, or the pride of reason, or malignant animosity, or inveterate vicious habits, do not prevent, the result is as sure as anything which depends on the unperverted action of evidence and moral influence upon the human mind.

Where no such guidance of experienced friendship can be had, no alternative remains but to add to the first prescription, inflexibly adhered to, the careful study of the best elementary authors on mental philosophy, and moral government, and the evidences of Christianity. This, though a somewhat protracted and laborious course, is the only alternative, and is justified and enforced by the immensity of the interest at stake.

Paley's Natural Theology stands unrivalled as a neat, copious, conclusive argument, of the existence and operation of the omniscient design, almighty power, and unmingled benevolence, of an eternal mind. But, for just and comprehensive views of the first principles of religion, the Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion, by Butler, is probably unrivalled by any product of the human mind; and, studied thoroughly, and honestly, and prayerfully, by any mind of sufficient power to be entitled to speculate at all, will guide it out of darkness into light.

The motives to adopt some course to alleviate and confirm a wavering mind are numerous and powerful.

Scepticism is a condition empty of enjoyment, and attended with great mental desolation. Sceptical men are never satisfied with their speculations, and are never happy, and are

often miserable. The mind was made for the acquisition of knowledge; and that knowledge concerning which they doubt — the being, character, law, and government of God — is, of all knowledge, the most interesting in itself, and the most important. Scepticism, therefore, dooms the intellect to sterility and famine, and the heart to vacancy, and the soul to suspense, on this most important subject.

It is also an entirely gratuitous deprivation of good, and endurance of evil.

The reiterated complaint, that there are so many opinions on the subject that nothing can be known, is as unfounded as it is pusillanimous. Were opinions the only source of knowledge, and to be weighed by the pound, or to be counted by the dozen, to decide by the suffrage of number what is true, the conclusion might be well founded; but facts and evidence are the material of knowledge, and the elementary truths of revelation are just as plain, and their results just as easily attained, and just as satisfactory and certain, as on any other subject. On the same condition that knowledge can be obtained in natural philosophy, it can be obtained in theology. Honest, persevering application is the universal condition of knowledge in every department of the kingdom of God; and the theological department is just as accessible to study, and just as certainly rewards industry, as any other. At the entrance it is written, — "If thou shalt incline thine ear to wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding; if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."*

* Prov. 2: 2—5.

By far the greatest portion of intelligent minds who have candidly and thoroughly investigated have escaped indecision and doubt, and multitudes by the same means have emerged from darkness, and come into the possession of a settled confidence. It were a libel on Heaven, to suppose that it has thrown wide open all the avenues of natural knowledge and lit up lamps about them, and shrouded with impenetrable darkness the threshold of moral government — the gateway of eternity. God is not the author of scepticism. He has not thrust out orbs of intelligence to roll about him in blackness of darkness. It is his desire to manifest himself to the minds which he has made, by pouring out floods of light around him, through the medium of his works and his word; and the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err.

To every sceptical man, I would say, then, in conclusion,— The subjects upon which your mind wavers are too important to be permitted to hang in doubt. You cannot prove that there is no God, or that the soul is not immortal, and accountable, and depraved, needing an atonement and sanctification, to escape everlasting ruin and obtain eternal life. But, before you reject the subject, you ought to be well ascertained that the inspiration of the Bible, and its representations of human character and the future state, are NOT true. Were your titles to your earthly estate doubtful, that fact would wake up all your energies, to put the matter out of doubt. If you had as much evidence in the night that your house is on fire, as you have that you are a sinner, and that God will by no means clear the guilty, would you cry "Peace!" and sleep on, because you did not know to a certainty that it was your house which was burning? Would you pass a road beset probably with robbers, because you had some doubts whether they would be there or not? If you had as much

evidence of poison in your cup as you have that Christianity is true and scepticism ruinous, would you drink, because you did not certainly know that there was death in it? It is not enough that you do not know the Bible to be true. You ought to know it to be false, before you reject it: seeing, if it is false, nothing is lost; and all is lost, if it be true, and you reject it.

LECTURE III.

THE PERILS OF ATHEISM TO THE NATION.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Such are the men whose assault upon Christianity was predicted eighteen hundred years ago, and fulfilled by the atheistic conspiracy in France against the being and government of God. The result terrified the world, and sent the experimentalists howling out of time, or crying to the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them.

Recently, the disciples of this school, imported and indigenous, having recovered from their panic, wish to repeat their experiment upon our republican institutions. For, even here, the conjunction of circumstances is not right. Religion and law, those cancers of the body politic, remain; and need to be removed, that healthful atheistic liberty may, in its deeds of glory, rival all the past achievements of earth and heaven. It is not my purpose to insinuate that all men who are sceptical, or who are deists, or that even all who may

doubt or disbelieve the being of a God, have a distinct participation in the views and plans of political atheists, or are debased by the loathsome profligacy which characterizes generally the real adepts in this crusade against human and divine institutions. There are many whom the influence of Christianity has kept back from presumptuous sins, and who, by their past habits and existing alliances, would be withheld from an attempt to turn the world upside down; and I am not surprised at the incredulity expressed by some as to the reality of a conspiracy in our land against the being of God, and our civil, and social, and religious institutions.

I can only say, that in Boston and New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and through New England and the Middle States, such an organization was as open and as well known as that of Christian churches, and no formal proof was needed, at the time these lectures were delivered. Their plans were avowed in their books, and tracts, and newspapers, and inculcated in their temples of reason, discussed in their weekly meetings, and threatened as an achievement which was near, even at the door. It was boasted that in Boston there were six hundred men on their side, ready to pledge their property for the propagation of their principles. And they actually petitioned the legislature for the charter of a college, to be established under their auspices. Of this combination many were young men, whose perversion extended sorrow and alarm through the city, and created for a time that kind of febrile action which precedes contempt of law, and insurrection. About this time the female apostle of atheistic liberty visited the city, and her lectures were thronged, not only by men, but even by females of respectable standing. And the effect of these lectures on such listeners was not the mere gratification of curiosity. She made her converts, and that, too, not

among the low and vicious alone. Females of education and refinement — females of respectable standing in society — those who had been the friends and associates of my own children — were numbered among her votaries, and advocated her sentiments.

In New York the effects of such efforts were still greater. Under the imposing title of "the working men," the campaign was opened at the polls, and in some wards the atheistic ticket came near to succeeding. About the same time, a society of philanthropists published a report on the miserable condition of abandoned females in the city, which produced a public meeting, attended by such high threats and furious denunciations, and emanations of atheistic liberty, and indications of popular fury, as threatened to supersede the protection of law, and to expose men of self-denying benevolence to personal violence.

Such also, for a time, was the influence of the invidious distinction between working men and others, and of the infidel trumpet-call to all the envious and vicious poor, that, to my certain knowledge, serious apprehension was felt by the most judicious and sagacious men, and measures were adopted to balance these invidious associations of working men by other associations, of correct principles, and thus to paralyze their power; and by lyceums, and libraries, and public lectures, to draw the youthful population of our cities from such pernicious influence to the paths of real science and virtue. It was as a humble effort in this countervailing movement that these lectures were composed and delivered; in which, at the time, no one supposed that the writer did "so fight as one that beateth the air."

The unholy alliance has, I doubt not, felt the results of these various efforts, in the reäction of a virtuous public

sentiment, and has been restrained. But they are not disbanded, they have not abandoned their object. Their books, and tracts, and newspapers, are still at work, and they are waiting only the recurrence of such a moral atmosphere as may favor the bursting out of the contagion with new virulence and power.*

It is the testimony of the female champion of atheistic liberty, whose opportunity to feel the pulse of moral evil in the nation was unequalled, and whose spirit-stirring eloquence was well calculated to apply the torch to the concealed train, that atheistical education must and will come, either by public suffrage or by revolution.

I wish it, however, to be understood, that it is not so much the power of this organization, as to its numerical force, or even its influence at the polls directly, that is to be feared, as its effect in creating and extending a poisonous leaven, which gradually and silently, but really and effectually, shall undermine the faith and moral principle of the nation, and prepare society for dissolution; which, in some eventful crisis, may suspend the attraction of the divine government, and cut the cords which bind us together as a nation.

Their numbers, however, are not to be despised, — including those who are intelligently committed, and those whose hearts and habits of evil so sympathize with them as to fall

* The existence of an extensive atheistic conspiracy in Germany, and other parts of Europe, following in the wake of pantheism, is too well known by all intelligent men to need any enlarged statement. Interesting particulars on this point are given in a recent letter of Prof. Alexander, of Princeton, in the N. Y. Observer. A large body of European population, in some of our leading cities, are in perfect sympathy with this European movement. In Cincinnati, certain rationalistic Germans have avowed their purpose to abolish the Sabbath, and have commenced public banquets and theatrical exhibitions on that day.

into and swell the channel of their river, by a natural affinity and a copious flood. Were all whom their designs and a coincidence of favoring circumstances might bring under their influence drawn out, it would develop a terrific numerical and physical power. The wisdom of God is in nothing more conspicuous than in the maintenance of his cause against vast majorities often of infuriated opposition, by keeping back the bad affinities from an organized concentration.

It is the tendency, then, of political atheism, to prostrate our republican institutions, which I am to illustrate in this lecture, — the tendency to stimulate and augment the powers of evil, and to suspend the restraining action of the divine government, until self-government becomes impossible, and revolution and anarchy follow, and a despotic government closes the scene.

And, whether man be regarded as a mere machine, and motive as acting on mechanical principles, or whether he be considered as a free, accountable, immortal mind, acting under the responsibilities of eternity; political atheism must differ in its results immensely from Christianity, and its influence be most baleful: for, if it is by motive, as a mechanical power, that he is moved to good and deterred from evil, what is the motive of a momentary existence, to an existence without end? A drop to the ocean — an atom to the universe. But, if mind is voluntary and accountable in its action, and motive is the good or evil associated by a divine constitution with holiness or sin, through endless ages, then is the power of the divine government proportioned to the strength of desire for good and aversion to evil, and to the magnitude, and certainty, and duration, of its rewards and its penalties. Atheism, then, lets out a race of famished, infuriated animals, goaded by instinct, and unrestrained by pro-

spective hopes and fears, to rend and devour, and destroy and be destroyed, as one class of insects sweeps away another. How can a republic of such animals be sustained, — which no eye of God inspects, no law restrains, upon which no hope of eternity dawns, and no fear darkens?

The necessity of intelligence and virtue to the perpetuity of republican liberty is as real as it is proverbial. Despotism may coërce the obedience of dark, ferocious mind against inclination, and lay its heavy hand upon the boiling wrath within. But, in republics, public sentiment will rule: and what will that public sentiment be, which emanates from the heart of man, unchastened by the hopes and fears of eternity, and undirected by coërcive human laws, and not humanized by the kind affinities of the family, and unstimulated to industry by the charm of personal acquisition, possession, and enjoyment? — Naked, ferocious human nature, conglomerated and condensed, in respect to all its tendencies to evil. Rivers do not more copiously and irresistibly bear onward their burthen to the ocean, nor does the rock, loosed from the cliff, with more certain desolation thunder down the precipice, than man, tempted and unrestrained, rushes on to dissipation and ruin.

All governments originate in the necessities of self-defence against the violent evil propensities of man. Walled cities, armies, navies, and notes of hand and bonds, and prisons and death, are memorials indicative of the indomitable propensity of man to evil. It is but a little, too, which law can preserve and protect from ingenious fraud, or successful violence. It has no sleepless omniscient eye, no omnipresent, omnipotent arm. Such delinquents only can be punished as can be arrested and convicted by a regular process of evidence. A government is needed to corroborate the public laws of men,

— which can look in upon the heart, and intimidate and stifle the young desire of evil, which can rouse up fear about the path of guilt, and tranquillize the madness of the heart.

Pagan legislators felt the necessity of such aid; and, bad as were the characters of their fictitious divinities, the sanctions of their religion were a blessing, compared with the philosophy of Epicurus, which turned off from the world the inspection of the gods, and the retributions of the future state. Its prevalence in Greece caused her downfall, and in the Roman empire was followed by the extinction of Roman patriotism, and by that enervating voluptuousness which undermined the republic, and introduced the despotism of the Cæsars. It was an era of mad ambition, and revolution, and proscription, and blood, — a political earthquake, from which the republic never recovered, and whose agitations ceased not till she sought repose in the calm of despotism. Among the Jews, the reign of the same philosophy was to morals what the reign of the plague is in a great city, — everything good died in its pestilent atmosphere, while all which was evil grew rank and abundant.

There never has been but one government professedly atheistic. The National Assembly of France, in the commencement of the revolution, appointed a committee to inquire and report whether there were a God: and the committee reported that there could be no liberty on earth while there was believed to be a God in heaven; and that there is no God, and that death is an eternal sleep. The Assembly adopted the report, abolished the Sabbath, burnt the Bible, instituted the decade, and ordained the worship of the goddess of liberty, in the person of a vile woman. But the consequences were too terrible to be endured; it converted the most polished nation of Europe into a nation of

fiends and furies, and the theatre of voluptuous refinement into a stall of blood. The mighty Mind who governs the universe — whose being they had denied, whose word they had burnt, whose worship they had abolished, whose protection they had rejected, and whose wrath they defied — withdrew his protection, and gave them up; and, with the ferocity of famished tigers, they fastened on each other's throats, and commenced the work of death, till, quickly, few were left alive to tell the tale of woe. And yet, this dreadful experiment these men would repeat upon us. The entire corroborating action of the government of God, with all its satellite institutions, they would abolish, to let out upon society in wrath, without mixture and without measure, the impatient depravity of man.

The family — the foundation of the political edifice, the methodizer of the world's business, and the mainspring of its industry — they would demolish. The family — the sanctuary of the pure and warm affections, where the helpless find protection, the wretched sympathy, and the wayward undying affection, while parental hearts live to love, and pray, and forgive — they would disband and desecrate. The family — that school of indelible early impression, and of unextinguished affection — that verdant spot in life's dreary waste, about which memory lingers — that centre of attraction, which holds back the heady and high-minded, and whose cords bring out of the vortex the shipwrecked mariner, after the last strand of every other cable is parted — these political Vandals would dismantle. The fire on its altars they would put out; the cold hand of death they would place on the warm beatings of its heart; to substitute the vagrancy of desire, the rage of lust, and the solitude, and disease, and

desolation, which follow the footsteps of unregulated nature, exhausted by excess.

The possession of the soil in fee simple, which to industry is like the action of the sun to the movements of the heavenly bodies, they would exchange for the common field, where men perform their tasks, and receive their rations, and eat, and drink, and sleep, and die; while infancy is committed to the tender mercies of state nurseries, in which, during the experiment in France, about nine out of ten died, — a system which, by infanticide and disease, had, in half a century, reduced by one-half the population of the Sandwich Islands, and, were it to be universal and permanent, would, in a few centuries, nearly depopulate the earth.

Thus would political atheism suspend the kind attractions of Heaven upon us, and let out the storm of guilty passion, and, by one disastrous wave, from stem to stern make a clear breach over us, sweeping away what patriots, and Christians, and Heaven, have done to render us happy.

It would unspiritualize our souls, cut off eternity from our being, to hang its leaden weights upon the wheels of our machine, till it run down and stop forever. It would teach us to regard accountability as a fiction, and right and wrong as obsolete terms, without use or meaning; while, with signal consistency, it anathematized the ministry of Christ, eulogized the most abominable crimes, and covered the most exalted virtues with contempt and obloquy.

The entire system is constructed for the accommodation of the most disgusting licentiousness, and produces the most fearful paroxysms of infuriated depravity. It reduces man to be the insect of a day, and renders murder an event of no more magnitude than the killing of a fly. "What is it to kill a man?" — said one of these atheistic philosophers, while

the work of death was going on, and the blood was flowing from the guillotine as from an inexhaustible fountain, — "Only just to change the direction of a few ounces of blood." And so, in the progress of the revolution which they contrived and let out upon the world, they changed, in about five millions of instances, the direction of a few ounces of blood.

But more than sufficient has been said to establish the Vandal tendency of political atheism upon our republican institutions. If the iron governments of Europe, justified by age, custom, power, and the sanctions of eternity, perverted to sustain them, could not stand, how shall we of yesterday escape, should the action of the same baleful cause be concentrated upon us? To us it would be like the falling of the dam, and the desolation of the unobstructed flood, — like the extinction of the orb of day, — like the suspension of gravity, and the reign of chaos.

It is not so difficult, however, to convince you of the tendencies of political atheism, as it is to awaken any suitable apprehension of any real danger from the concentrated, indefatigable and extended action of these men: the very enormity of the system tending to inspire incredulity. Bad, indeed, you are prepared to say, is the system — blasphemous — detestable; but what can such men do — mere visionaries, fools, and madmen? No doubt this testimony is true. But, if you possessed indubitable evidence of a conspiracy formed to burn the good city of Cincinnati, composed only of visionaries, fools, and madmen, would you sell your engines, and disband your fire-companies, and go to sleep, because there were no honest and sober men among them? Who are better qualified than visionaries and madmen to scatter firebrands, arrows, and death?

But surely the absurdity of the system must be its antidote.

Alas! Does the history of the world prove that absurdity is an efficacious antidote to error? What absurdities can be conceived greater than men have swallowed in all ages? They are not delicate about the dose, provided its lethean power puts conscience to sleep, and reconciles impunity with crime.

But the system can never prevail. It contains the elements of its own destruction. It would depopulate the world. — I know it; but millions, in the mean time, may perish, as millions did perish in France in the making of the abortive experiment. The philosophists of France believed and taught that the emptying of the earth of one entire generation would be a cheap price for the achievement of atheistic liberty; and they sacrificed hecatombs, and at last discovered that atheism leads to despotism, and not to liberty.

But, in our country, these philosophers are, to be sure, weak, misguided, and visionary; yet they are not ferocious, but mild, polite, well-meaning, honest men. — And , with few exceptions, they were in France, till blood began to flow, — and then, like the tame lion who has tasted blood, they were furies; while from morning till night, and from night to morning, the guillotine groaned with its labor, and wore off its edge in its bloody work. There is no ferocity which is equal to that which prevails where the madness of licentious liberty predominates, and the fear of God and the protection of law fail, in the presence of an atheistic mob.

But in this country it is not proposed to revolutionize by force, but by public sentiment, till it shall speak out at the polls. — And so they proposed to do in France, and drew some honest men into their alliance. But when the crevasse

was opened, it ran blood, instead of water; and though to open it were easy, to close it surpassed their power.

But the people of this country are too enlightened ever to become the dupes of such folly.

No doubt of it, if they will consent to open their eyes upon the menacing evil, and to concentrate upon it the withering power of public indignation and stern resistance. But who can say that an organized band, winding their dark way, and watching their opportunity in some eventful crisis of national peril, may not, in evil hour, fall on a moment when a spark upon the train may be irretrievable ruin? And who would trust good-natured, visionary incendiaries about the magazine? And who would sleep over such a mine?

But their numbers are too small, and their influence too contemptible, to justify apprehension.*

The number of vicious, unprincipled, and ambitious, and desperate, and reckless men, of whose influence, through various bad affinities, they might avail themselves, is not small. And scepticism is now the epidemic of the world, as superstition was in the dark ages; and if, under the favor of the one, Peter the Hermit stirred up a crusade for the cross, it ought to be remembered that, under the other epidemic, Voltaire, with equal power, stirred up a crusade against it.

A republic whose constituents are intelligence and virtue affords the most perfect condition of human society; but it is the most delicate, and complex, and perilous, and difficult of preservation, and facile of destruction; and when it falls, there is no chaos so dark and dreadful as the anarchy which follows. Well might the angel sent down to announce the plagues of revolution utter with a loud voice the reiterated cry,

* Every year since this was written has augmented their numbers.

"Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth!" Of all the materials which God has made, mind, no doubt, is the most powerful, and, in its disordered state, the most ungovernable and terrible; for, though in great masses, and under mild and efficient supervision, like the mirror surface of the ocean in a calm, it reflects back upon the heavens the images of its beauty, — in a moment, should these safeguards fail, the breath of some pestilent wind may rave over it, and wreck the treasures which are carried upon its bosom. The cloud as a man's hand, then, ought to be watched; and every individual with dark lantern wending his secret way to the magazine should be stopped and interrogated.

It is not, then, by a numerical majority at the polls only, that this atheistic conspiracy may destroy us. They may create a pestilent atmosphere, and send out moral contagion, and blow blasting and mildew from between their shrivelled lips. They may poison the fountains, and fever the heart, and madden the brain, of the nation. They may suspend, on the mass of minds, those moral attractions of heaven, without which society will dissolve, as organic matter would, should the attraction of gravity and cohesion cease. Let the belief and feeling of accountability fail from the public mind, and poverty, and envy, and ambition, and lust, be summoned to a crusade against religion, purity, property, and law, and how long would the police of our cities protect us? How soon would the laws of the land be cobwebs, and crime roll over us its wave of desolation, as once the waters of the flood swept over the earth!

I am not an alarmist, to proclaim danger when there is none, nor a false prophet, to conceal it when it approaches. I trust that my country will live, and rise to a glorious immortality. But if she should fall on evil times, and be ruined,

while the fires of her burning ascend, and the fragments of her wreck are passing by, and the chains of her sons going to captivity are riveting, I intend to be able to retain the consolation of Hector amid the ruins of burning Troy :

"Si Pergama dextra
Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent."

The relations of the divine government to republican institutions, the absolute necessity of an all-pervading moral influence, and the certain direful consequences of an exclusively prevalent leaven of infidelity, are, I am persuaded, but imperfectly, and to a very limited extent, understood. It is my purpose to give the subject a thorough discussion, as associated with the open, avowed purpose of a class of men, to set aside utterly the government of God, the existence of marriage, and of separate property, and the influence of all our political institutions.

Let the means and their adaptation to the end be well considered: — tracts, and lectures, and paragraphs, and treatises, addressed to those principles of human discontent and insubordination, in the masses, which have rendered it difficult to protect life and property, and maintain the peace and order of society, — recognizing their misery, sympathizing with them in their wrongs, and inflaming by argument and by ridicule their envy, and pride, and rage, — tracts filled with specious cavils, and popular sophistry, and undermining scepticism, eradicating conscience and principle, and inspiring ridicule and blasphemy, and the most unlimited licentiousness, — directed especially to the uninformed and unevangelized portion of our population in city and country, on the farm and in the work-shop and manufactory, — swarming, like the frogs of Egypt, from the centre to the circumference of

our land, — designed and eminently calculated to divide society against itself, by fostering invidious distinctions between the laboring and intellectual classes, and the relatively poor and the rich, — exhibiting industry, and separate property, and virtue, as offences against society, and poverty and vice as the result only of religion, and laws, and persecution, — till the physical power, misdirected and infuriated, shall turn that impatient energy against the institutions of liberty, which in Europe was turned against the feudal system, and thrones, and despotism.

Let not the result of these means and of false security be forgotten, in overturning one of the strongest governments in Europe, with fewer means and greater hindrances than attend their experiment here.

When Voltaire boasted that he was tired of hearing it said that twelve men overturned idolatry and established the Christian religion, and that he would prove that one man was sufficient to expel it from the world; he knew that his infidel clubs were organized, and concocting the poison which books, and tracts, and plays, and every species of publication, were circulating through every artery and vein of a great empire. He saw the leaven fermenting, the fever rising, and the unquiet earth heaving. But, while the magazines of woe were filling, the nation slept. While the storm was coming on, those who raised it were despised. "What can they do?" said the king, in the majesty of his power. "What can they do?" said the nobility, which guarded the throne. "Chimerical, contemptible, what can they do," said the bishops, "against us, who hold the conscience of the nation by the power of habit and the terrors of eternity?" To them it was no more alarming than the mild cloud of evening. But soon it blackened the heavens, and poured down desolation.

The mining, to the ear of false confidence, was as the ticking of a clock beneath the surface, till in a moment it became the voice of mighty thunderings. The same results from the same causes had come to pass in England, had not the sagacious Pitt, warned by the fate of his neighbors, consented to take counsel of his fears, and prepare a resisting power; and to his foresight and firmness the civilized world owes its exemption from the overwhelming scourge of atheistic revolution.

There is no trait in the character of man more surprising than his infatuated insensibility to the danger of moral causes.

With the natural world, we can make him acquainted, and lead him to foresee the evil, and hide himself; while, upon the moral world, he opens his vacant eye, from generation to generation, uninstructed and unwarned. Its laws are as obvious, its causes of evil as deadly and as uniform, in individuals, families, cities and nations; and still, while the host of evil is mustering, and augmenting, and moving on to their work of ruin, he cries "Peace!" and ridicules those who talk of danger. All nations have been let down from the high tone of early vigor and correct principle, by the outcry against bigotry, and severity, and needless scrupulosity; and by good-natured, simpering, liberal, careless, fool-hardy security in going down stream. It was thus the Epicurean philosophy unharnessed the loins, and quenched the courage, and divided the counsels, of patriotic Greece. The same infection extended to Rome, and touched with death the iron sinews and proud heart of that vast empire. Among the Jews, it was saying to the seers, See not, and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, prophesy smooth things, prophesy deceits, which prepared the way for that unparalleled moral corrup-

tion which ended in the destruction of their city, and the dispersion of their nation.

The same process, as the natural result of age, and wealth, and voluptuousness, has begun among ourselves.

The energetic virtue of our Puritan ancestry, while we refuse not the blessings it has sent down to us, and which, with a less elastic tone, had never reached us, we are beginning to make the subject of apology and the butt of ridicule. From generation to generation, the threadbare story is going down, that they were too strict; while every son who, in religion and moral rectitude, resembles his Puritan sire, is made the subject of patriotic suspicion that he is plotting against the liberties of his country.

Now, what have these banded Goths and Vandals to do, but to sing our own songs over their cups, and repeat our own stale jests, and join us in unharnessing the nation from virtuous restraint, by loading with ridicule, suspicion, and obloquy, those who know that righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is the reproach of any people? If a foreign army of half a million should invade us, the danger would be small; for the effort would correspond with the exigency. But when an order of men are systematically mustering and marshalling, and applying those moral causes which, in all ages, have been more potent in the dissolution of nations than fleets and armies, how is it that those who fear their power are deemed enthusiasts, and charged with the designs they would avert, while smiling, thoughtless, reckless, good-natured men, who cry "Peace!" are regarded as the overflowings of charity and wisdom? But it is a charity which in all ages has dug the grave of liberty, and a wisdom which has buried deep the best interests of man.

If we look at the power of small organized bodies, acting

systematically and perseveringly upon improvident and unorganized masses, we may learn not to despise this atheistic fraternity.

The alertness and perseverance which characterize minorities in evil is as proverbial as the phlegmatic indolence and security of majorities on the side of virtue and order; — commonly the one gains and the other loses, till the majority changes sides. In all republics, also, the gravitating tendencies of evil, unaided, are powerful. All demagogues flatter the vices of the community, and all who practise licentiousness, and live by its patronage, are open-mouthed for liberty, and infuriated against bigots. What, then, have these men to do but to row downward with the tide?

In every political movement, also, the unprincipled have the advantage over the principled and sober, in their unlimited variety of means. These considerations — without organized treason, tolerated by our abounding charity — made the fathers of the Revolution tremble, before the constitution was formed; whose administration, though auspicious, has not allayed the apprehensions of our wisest and best men. Is it not an infatuated security, then, which refuses to fear, and cries "Peace!" when an organized association of men, wise to do evil, and aided by the immemorial downward tendencies of human nature, are directing their most powerful assaults on our most vulnerable and unprotected points?

Consider, also, with how much greater ease society may be undermined and destroyed, than organized and built up.

Slowly and reluctantly does human nature rise from ignorance, and sloth, and animalism; and many hands and constant effort are required to raise and hold up the sluggish mass, while a single hand may suffice to cut the cord, and let it thunder back upon destruction. A well-tuned orchestra

and a harmonious choir demand science and skill, while a fool can put the instruments out of tune, and send out notes of discord. To raise a garden to its highest state of culture, taste and beauty, requires the experience of generations. But a herd of swine may root it all up in a day.

It must not be forgotten, moreover, in this comparison of forces, that, for the destruction of our institutions, the bad passions only of our nature are needed in a field where the seed is thick sown spontaneously, and the vegetation is rapid and rank, and the harvest abundant, without culture. No Bibles are needed, nor sanctuaries, nor laws, nor courts, nor Sabbaths, nor ministers of evil, to prevent the extinction and secure the continuance of selfishness, and pride, and envy, and covetousness, and ambition, and fraud, and sloth, and inebriation, and revenge; while all possible influence of revelation, and law, and schools, and families, and religious institutions, can scarcely keep down the intrusive weeds, and give space and nutrition to the plants of virtue. What a compact, then, is that, in which the enemies of our republican institutions have only to aid the vices which flourish spontaneously, and strangle the sickly exotics, which our utmost care can scarcely keep alive!

LECTURE IV.

PERILS OF ATHEISM TO OUR NATION.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

The persons described in this passage denied the providence of God, as the administration of a moral government by rewards and punishments, and asserted the indiscriminating empire of the laws of nature. From the uniformity of his providential government, they inferred that no intelligent moral government existed. They were scoffers at God and religion, walking after their own lusts. They are a particular development of wickedness in the last time — the Gospel dispensation. Their appearance commenced early, and in modern days has come out in ample desolation.

We have given some account of this class of men in modern Europe, and have entered upon the consideration of their efforts in this country.

It is proposed, in this lecture, to illustrate, in continuation, the perils of the entire system of scepticism, organized and unorganized, which goes to suspend the action of the government of God, and the influence of Christianity upon our nation: and

1. The extent of our country renders the efficient super-

vision of our laws impossible, without a vigorous all-pervading tone of intelligence and moral principle. Our interests are, in fact, one; but our vision is limited, and our information imperfect, and our selfishness, and pride, and passion, are great, and impatient of self-denial and contradiction; and misinformation, and jealousy, and local prejudice, are of spontaneous growth, and, with the sinister culture of reckless ambition, of rampant vegetation.

When, therefore, we consider the vigor of our national intellect, the freedom of our habits, the self-will and self-sufficiency of our republican character, our boundless enterprise, our corrupting abundance, and voluptuous dissipation, and fractious impatience of rebuke or control,— is this the nation — so fearfully and wonderfully made, and so eminently fitted for self-destruction — to say unto God, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways"? and to Christ, "Let us alone, thou Jesus of Nazareth, for what have we to do with thee?"

Our danger will be seen to be greatly augmented, if we consider, moreover, that, beside the collisions of individuals with law and order, some of our most perilous movements are the conflicts of independent states — of mighty nations — condensed for particular purposes into one nation, by the individual suffrage of the entire people; and that often one half the nation is roused in furious political strife, to counteract the desires of the other half.

Now, what motives of human origin and application can extend their all-pervading and efficient control over such a mass of mind, so diversified by circumstances, and so delicately, and complexly, and slenderly allied, and so infuriated often by passion, pride, and discontent?

Who but God can speak efficaciously to the waves of such

an unquiet sea? What but the omnipotent attractions of his glory, and the sanctions of his eternal government, and the tranquillizing influence of his Gospel upon renovated mind, can hold such discordant and powerful materials in prosperous social alliance? These atheists might as well form a project to annihilate the sun, and hold the material universe together by mere cobwebs instead of his attractions, as to withdraw from masses of depraved mind the moral influence of God's government and the institutions of Christianity.

It was with the utmost difficulty that our union was formed. Nothing but an urgent necessity, and wisdom, and prudence, and patience, and condescension, and confidence in God, and his protection and blessing, saved us. When our numbers were small, our extent limited, our capital and credit and enterprise *in embryo*,— and at an age of relative purity of morals, and before the agitations of party spirit assumed their fiery aspect, and terrific power,— the patriots, whom nature and the Revolution had made great, and invested with unlimited influence, found it extremely difficult to achieve the compromise that made us one. And when it was done, it was with trembling that the patriot navigators, with Washington at the helm, launched forth upon the untried deep; and though, as yet, we have not foundered, not one of the patriot band has died in full and certain hope. Nor is the danger past. Dark clouds environ our horizon now, and rocks and quicksands are about our way. Our ablest captains, who in ordinary times conceal their fears, open their eyes and tell us that there are breakers, and a stiff wind, and a lee shore, and that they cannot be answerable for the safety of the ship. That she will weather the storm they hope, but fear that in evil hour she may strike or founder. The concussions of party spirit now are not the healthful conflicts of

jealous liberty, but the paroxysms of envy, and desperate ambition, and deadly hate; not the breath of zephyrs, and gentle undulations of the lake, to prevent stagnation, but the perilous commotion of powerful elements. What, then, in such a crisis, might not be anticipated, should a band of these political experimenters get on board, and gain the helm, on purpose to wreck the ship, to re-construct from its fragments another of better model, and to be navigated under better auspices,— to throw overboard compass, quadrant, and chart, and put out the sun, to steer by conjecture and the stars? What if they are chimerical and honest? How many misguided men aboard does it require to wreck a ship in a storm?

The unexampled power and prosperity of our nation does but amplify the causes of our ruin, and hasten and render more inevitable its accomplishment, without the corresponding moral influence of the government of God.

Steam has, indeed, annihilated time and distance, and canals and railroads have exalted the valleys, and brought down the mountains; and mechanism, by its abbreviations of labor, is relaxing the curse on beast and man, and multiplying a hundred-fold the products of human labor.

But if other republics, on their little territories, and in their dilatory course, accumulated the means of effeminacy and ruin in a few generations, how swiftly must our sun roll up to its meridian, to set among clouds generated by the decomposition of our rank abundance!

Nor let us confide presumptuously in the sufficiency of a national education. For, though ignorance may destroy us, knowledge alone cannot save us. Knowledge is, indeed, power; but it is power to kill as well as to make alive, as it is wielded by the madness of the heart, or by moral principle.

The men who terrified the world by their crimes, did not lack mental culture.

It is the heart which governs the intellect, and not the intellect which governs the heart; and it is by the education of the national heart in the first principles of the government of God, and the guidance of the national will by the hopes and fears of eternity added to the sanctions of time, that we can undergird the ship, and secure to her a safe passage and quiet moorings.

2. The very greatness of our liberty is its most terrific attribute, in the presence of organized licentiousness and demoralization.

In a despotic government, force may protect us, where public sentiment is too corrupt to secure the execution of the laws. But in a republic it is not so. There, when public sentiment falters, the laws have no power; and then, first anarchy, and next despotism ensues. The genius of our government, and the competitions of party, have introduced universal suffrage. The door is wide open to all who are born, and to all who immigrate, and cannot be shut. We must live by universal suffrage, or perish. If we can imbue with knowledge and virtue the mass, we shall live; but if irreligion and profligacy predominate, sure as the march of time, we fail. Such mobs among us, as in England they play with as the lion would play with the kid, would destroy us. Force enough to quell them would, in the hand of an ambitious demagogue, be force enough to enslave us. Ours must be a self-government or a despotism. Such a nation as this must be greatly free, or crushed by the most rigorous despotism that ever extorted groans from suffering humanity. Do any exult in our safety, and bid defiance to disaster, because we are now so free and so powerful? The inconstant

ocean might as well exult in her momentary tranquillity, because her waves are above control; when it is the very circumstance of their freedom and indomitable power which gives to the atmosphere such sway over the fluid mass.

Twice in France the physical power has gained the ascendency over law; and, by the last victory, the discovery has been made, that, to patriots, cities are fortresses, and pavements munitions. This is one of the most glorious and dreadful discoveries of modern days, — glorious in its ultimate results, in the emancipation of the world, but dreadful in those intervening revolutions which popular power may effect in the achievement of liberty, without corresponding intelligence and virtue for its permanent preservation.

The achievement of liberty is not difficult; the question is, where to put it, — with whom to intrust it. If it be committed to the multitude, it will perish by anarchy. If national guards are employed for its defence, the bayonets which protect it are at any moment able to destroy it for a military despotism. If to a republican king it be intrusted, it will have to be regulated by state policy, and fed on bread and water, until the action of the heart, and the movement of the tongue, and the power of the arm, as under the deadly incubus, shall cease. THERE IS NOT IN THIS WIDE WORLD A SAFE DEPOSIT FOR LIBERTY, BUT THE HEARTS OF PATRIOTS, SO ENLIGHTENED AS TO BE ABLE TO JUDGE OF CORRECT LEGISLATION, AND SO PATIENT AND DISINTERESTED AS TO PRACTISE SELF-DENIAL AND SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD.

But can such a state of society be found and maintained, without the Bible, and the institutions of Christianity? Did a condition of unperverted liberty, uninspired by Christianity, ever bless the world through any considerable period of

duration? The power of a favoring clime, and the force of genius, did thrust up from the dead level of monotonous despotism the republics of Greece to a temporary liberty; but it was a patent model only, compared with such a liberty as ours; and it was partial, and capricious, and of short duration, and rendered illustrious rather by the darkness which preceded and followed, than by the benign influence of its own beams.

Certainly it is Christianity which, in this country, rocked the cradle of our liberties, defended our youth, and brought us up to manhood. And it has been proved that under her auspices three millions and twelve millions of people may be protected and governed. But that twenty, fifty, or a hundred millions can, without a vast augmentation of moral power over mind, has not been proved; while all past analogies and all present circumstances of our nation announce that Christianity is our only hope, and that without it our destruction does not slumber.

During all past ages, the vast majority of the human family, unblest by revelation, have been idolaters and slaves; and, at the present time, all nations upon whom the sun of righteousness has not arisen are in deep darkness, and are crushed by a grievous despotism. Daylight is not more uniformly found in the track of the sun, than civil liberty is found in the track of Christianity, and despotism in its absence.

The problem, then, to be settled by this young but mighty nation, is this: Can a sufficient intellectual illumination be combined with a sufficient power of moral purity, to create and perpetuate a predominant and efficacious public sentiment in favor of a correct morality, and efficient law for the protection of virtue and the punishment of crime? If this can

be achieved, the nation will be the safe depository of liberty forever. The heart of this mighty people will be its abiding sanctuary, and the arm of this nation, uncorrupt, will, under God, be its everlasting protection; and we shall be the greatest, happiest nation that ever lived. Violence shall not be heard in our land, nor wasting and destruction within our borders. Our walls will be salvation, and our gates will be praise. Our sun will not go down, nor our moon wane. The Lord will be our unsetting sun, and our God will be our glory.

We shall not appreciate the danger of an organized effort against our civil and religious institutions, without considering the various bad affinities of our depraved nature, upon which designing men may easily act, and bring them into unconscious subserviency to their purpose.

It cannot be denied that human nature lusteth to envy. No passions in man are more powerful than selfishness, and pride, and inordinate desire, and discontent. These were the origin of the contest between the patricians and plebeians in Rome, which continually agitated and at length destroyed the republic. There is a distinction inseparable from the diverse capacities, characters, habits, and employments of men in which the different departments of labor are indispensable to the most elevated possible condition of society. It exists in every republic, and, no doubt, it is a constitution of things inseparable from the intelligent perfect society of the universe. But it is a constitution of providence against which rebellion has rolled its most furious tide; and, especially, as the inequality of conditions is aggravated by crime among uninformed masses, goaded by suffering, and reckless of principle, it constitutes a most malignant and terrific physical power, looking up with green-eyed envy upon all the happy

fruits of virtue, and knowledge, and industry, in the orders of society above.

None who have not moved through this moral atmosphere, and watched the eye, and noted the significant tones of complaint, and movements of subdued but bitter feeling, can conceive what a magazine lies under the foundations of all which is valuable to man.

This jealousy of the higher orders of society is especially powerful against the rich — it is almost like the ceaseless burning of heated iron. There is pervading the entire class of relative poverty a strong feeling of dissatisfaction, as if they were injured, and as if the rich were the aggressors, and were revelling on the spoils which had been wrested from them.

The various forms of dishonesty, and peculation, and fraud, and violence, are but so many symptomatic indications of the impatient violence which, but for the strong arm of the law, would break out in one levelling prostration of all which art, and industry, and science, have reared.

With the constant admonition, that this state of feeling is wrong — that inequality of condition is inseparable from the best possible constitution of society — that its miseries are adventitious, originating from the perversion of Heaven's wisdom and goodness; even without intellectual perversion, with the understanding and conscience armed against such feelings, with the omniscient eye of God on the heart, and his voice reiterating, "Be still, and know that I am God,"— with his sword drawn, and his lightnings at hand, and his thunderings uttering their voices, and all the retributions of time and eternity impending,— it is as much as can be done, to prevent explosion and revolution, and more than is done, to protect entirely life, and liberty, and property.

The constancy of peculation in trade, the ingenuity of swindlers and pickpockets, the dexterity of theft, the violence of robbery, and the increasing recklessness of murder, show what, as the government of God falls back, is rising up and rushing in upon us,— show that the mountain is unquiet, and that these doctrines of atheistic levelling liberty are like so many sparks falling upon a train already prepared for an explosion, and waiting only for the moment of ignition.

Who that has to deal with property, and those who covet, does not know the strong fever which burns beneath the restraints of law? How much would any man, well versed in the ways of men, give for his outstanding debts of which he could produce no evidence, or which the laws, sustained by executive power, could not collect? The relations of civilized society, and separate property, could not exist an hour after public sentiment and the physical power had ceased to sustain the laws.

Let this pestilent philosophy, then, augment the moral obliquity of the lower classes of society, by adding the sanction of principle to their perverted, impatient, alienated feeling. Let private property and inequality of condition be stigmatized as an artificial condition,— the work of priests and lawyers, of church and state —a vile civil and ecclesiastical aristocracy. Let the laws be traduced as systems of organized injustice and vile persecution; and the soothing accents of sympathy and hope be breathed upon the ear of suffering humanity by these dear lovers of the people. Let them inculcate on every heart the people's wrongs, and their own magnanimous sympathy. Let their voice be heard without, at the corners of the streets, at the chief places of concourse, at the opening of the gates, and in all the places of strong drink and inebriation, and sinks of pollution and

infamy and woe,—ascribing their sufferings to priestcraft, and property, and marriage, and virtue, and law. Let them flatter the multitude for virtues which they do not possess, and eulogize as virtues their rank crimes — putting light for darkness, and darkness for light. Let them praise one another, and denounce all whose concord with them does not promise aid to their project. Let them bargain their suffrage to ambitious demagogues, who care not by what ladder they rise, or what is demolished, provided they ascend, — upon condition that one good turn shall be repaid by another, — until, by collusion, and the concentration of evil forces, they gain the balance in some closely contested election, with a sufficient mass of corrupt propensity, and evil daring, and infatuated madness, to seize the moment to let out their experiment. Then, indeed, it will be but for a moment. But that moment will be the downfall of liberty, and the overturnings of revolution, and the infuriated pouring out of blood. It will be but a moment, and the indignation will have passed over; but, like the inundation, it will find a paradise, and leave behind it an utter desolation.

If you think that such a crisis cannot come on our country, you have not studied the constitution of society, the character of man, the past history of moral causes, or the existing signs of the times. You have not read the glowing pages of specious argument, of powerful eloquence, of spirit-stirring indignation, pouring adventitious action upon the fever of the brain, and the madness of the heart.

Hear these Catilines harangue their troops, in the five hundred thousand grog-shops of the nation — the temples and inspiration of atheistic worship: — "Comrades, patriots, friends, — the time has come. Long have you suffered, and deeply, and in all sorts of ways. Property has been denied you, that others

might roll in splendor; and toil imposed, that they might inherit ease; and poverty inflicted, that they might be blessed with more than heart could wish; and, to add ignominy to fraud, and persecution to insult, your names are cast out as evil. You snatch the crumbs from their table, and they call it stealing; the momentary alleviation of your woes by stimulus, drunkenness; and your intercourse as freeborn animals is branded with outlawry and burning shame; and all this by that intolerant aristocracy of wealth, religion, and law! You are miserable, and you are oppressed; but you hold in your own hand the power of redress. Those splendid dwellings, and glittering equipages — those cultivated farms, and cattle on a thousand hills — those barns, bursting out with all manner of plenty — those voluptuous cities, and stores, crowded with merchandise — and boats and ships, transporting wealth — and those banks and vaults of gold, — are yours. You are the people: numbers are with you — votes are with you. Rise, freemen — rise! — to the polls — to the polls — and all is yours!"

It is true this levelling system would destroy the industry of the world. It would augment the number and aggravate the poverty of the poor, as it would expel the arts, banish commerce, stop the plough, and shut up the work-shop, and send back the ruined race to skins, and bows and arrows. But what is all this to a short-sighted, infuriated population, who know only that they are miserable, and feel that all above them is invidious distinction and crime; and that, to rise, it is only necessary to grasp the pillars of society, and pull it down? Is there no treason in breathing such doctrines upon the ear of discontented millions? It is throwing firebrands into a magazine.

The numbers to whom these men and their doctrines have

access are not duly considered by those who think that there is no danger. To the uninformed population of our cities, and mechanical and manufacturing establishments, as well as to our sparse frontier settlements, they pay a sedulous attention. To all the vicious, incensed by the outlawry of public sentiment, they send the tokens of their sympathy, the manuals of their instruction, and the trumpet-call to action, with unfaltering confidence of their aid. Upon all the wretched young men whom pleasure has seduced from the right way, stung to madness and desperation by loss of character and blighted hopes,— such as Catiline drew after him to overthrow the liberties of Rome,— they may calculate without danger of deception. While the covetous, who live by the vices of the community, and fear that we are going too fast, without intending the extremities which come, may aid to bring them on beyond retrieve. Nominal believers, from great aversion to the accountabilities of an endless government and punishment, may, from repulsion on the one hand, and sympathetic attractions on the other, be made more than neutral, while the forces are collecting, and the conflict is coming on. And all who regard the Bible as a dangerous book for popular use, might aid the common effort of restricting its circulation, and putting down rival denominations,— intending only their own benefit, but unable, as the crisis rolled on, to stop the overpowering evil.

The direct and indirect influence, then, of this poisonous leaven, industriously propagated, and favored by human nature, and the multiplied coincidences of character, interest, and circumstance, cannot be small, or be safely despised.

But if to this onward movement of concentrated power, you add the systematic effort which is making to break down the moral resistances of the community, and to open an

unobstructed admission to the flood, our solicitude may well increase.

The natural course of business and pleasure, in its bearings upon the Sabbath, is sufficiently appalling. This day is, no doubt, the great organ of the divine administration. It is of little consequence whether men disbelieve the existence of God, or forget his character and laws and authority. But, separate from the Sabbath and social worship, no efficacious means exist for the religious instruction of mankind; and the cessation of the Sabbath is the abolition of the government of God as really as could be effected by the disbelief of his being. But this dreadful work of obliteration, unplanned and undesigned, is going on as fast almost as atheism could desire. The stream of commerce on our sea-coast is now swelled by the streams of dissipation which pour out from our cities, as from inexhaustible fountains, and by the streams of business, private and national, which hold on their unchecked and augmenting career; while our inland seas and canals, and our stages, and the steamboats, and the railroads, in all directions, seem to vie with each other in their all-pervading and lengthened career of Sabbath-day violation. Alas! the whole nation seems to be, on the Sabbath, in a state of migration, and never in one stay; the sanctuary empty, and every stage, and boat, and tavern, full. Who can arrest and instruct this vagrant migrating mind, and who train up the children of the nation, abandoned to ignorance and irreligion? Could the nation be intellectually educated, were all its instructors and all its pupils driving about on wheels and boats in hours consecrated to study? And can the nation be instructed in the government of God, and its own relative duties and responsibilities, by the way-side, or on the canal, or the lake, running unceasingly the race of business and

pleasure? Assuredly this mighty nation cannot be compelled by law to stop and consecrate the Sabbath to the great and benevolent ends of its institution. But it is equally certain, that if it will not voluntarily pause and do homage to the wisdom and benevolence of God, by a spontaneous rest for purposes of religious education and moral culture, the nation is undone. Europe never will be qualified for liberty until she keeps her Sabbaths in a better manner; and this happy nation will not long possess anything to be envied above the kingdoms of Europe, after the influence of her Sabbaths has passed away.

But, as if human depravity and the natural tendencies of things did not sufficiently hasten our ruin, these conspirators, aided inconsiderately by multitudes who know not their purpose, are exciting a systematic jealousy against the Sabbath and its friends. The observance of it, by our fathers and ourselves, in the only way in which its great designs can be answered, is ridiculed; our solicitude for its preservation stigmatized as sainted hypocrisy; our meek supplications and reasonings against its legalized violation adduced as pregnant evidence of conspiracy against our country's liberty.

Great efforts are made also to inspire with jealousy, and to play off against one another, the great Christian denominations of our land, — to render our resistance impotent, and the very name of Christian odious.

While they were few and feeble, they were despised; but their multiplication has inspired alarm, and no hope remains but to divide and conquer. Infidels behold with terror the great denominations assimilating in evangelical feeling and effort; and they know that the consummation of confidence and love among us would be death to their hopes. But apprised, too well apprised, of the infirmities of good men,

— and how open their ears are to suspicion, how much faster false accusation flies than detection follows, and that lies repeated produce on millions the odium which might justly attach to the reality, — they cease not from their whisperings and false accusations. They are aware how envy opens the ear to detraction, and guards it against the evidence of integrity, by listless inattention, or a jealous scrutiny. They appreciate fully the credulity of men, and the power of a terrified imagination; which, the more it looks into darkness, and the less it can see, so much the more believes that it swarms with gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire. They know how tenacious we all are of civil and religious liberty, and that nothing would sooner cover a denomination with infamy than to attempt its own aggrandizement on the ruin of other denominations. And, with these elements in view, they seem to have surveyed their ground, and staked their cause on the prospect of sowing discord among brethren, by rumors and false accusation.

Their plan is evidently to play off their artillery first upon one denomination, flattering the rest, till the first may be humbled; the next most feared and hated is to take its turn, and be battered down; — giving to the most tame-spirited and abject the privilege of being eaten up the last.

A furious infidel demagogue, not long since, was pouring out his heated invective against the Presbyterians. A gentleman present said to him, — "Why do you single out the Presbyterians? Other denominations preach the same doctrines, and have revivals, and propagate the Bible, tracts, and missions." The answer was, "One at a time. We will dispose of the rest when we have taken care of you."

The allegation of a purpose to unite church and state by one, or by all denominations, is the most foolish, baseless cal-

umny which was ever uttered. There never was an enterprise more opposed to all the feelings of all the citizens of the United States, nurtured from their infancy in the principles of liberty; and no project could be conceived more absolutely impossible, or which would concentrate such an overwhelming tide of public sentiment against it. There is, however, one union of church and state which is possible, and to which the eyes of the community may well be directed. It is the offered alliance of political men in power with one or another rival denomination, sought for purposes of ambition, or by a tottering administration, to sustain its brief authority, or to perpetuate its power.

It is in this way only that the church ever was united with the state. The church never sought the alliance, never conspired, and never achieved any such union of the state. The state has always sought the alliance of the church, and in republics the danger of this kind of tampering and corruption is not less than in monarchies. It is true that public sentiment would not long endure it, and the favored denomination would be corrupted and ruined by the foul embrace, as the church in this alliance always has been. Yet the thought is full of terror, that the time may ever come when unprincipled men, to paralyze the influence of Christianity, and perpetuate their own bad eminence, shall be able to marshal with jealousy and hate the great denominations of our land one against another. For so mighty are they, and so furious are ecclesiastical politics, that the conflict would be like the battle of angels, opening infernal artillery on the one side, and heaping mountains on their foes on the other. But mark my words: There will never be a union of church and state in this nation, unless it be one which is sought by infidels in power, to perpetuate their own ascendency; and it will commence in persecution, and end in civil war.

There is one device more, put into operation by the atheistic fraternity, which, in ingenuity on their part, and credulity on the part of others, surpasses all which has been witnessed in modern days.

It is the device of making the performance of our Christian duties, and the exercise of our religious liberty, evidence of conspiracy against liberty; and the most beneficent and indispensable efforts to perpetuate our republican institutions evidence of treason. It is reduced to a certainty that civil government cannot administer the moral influence which is needed to diffuse and perpetuate moral principle and virtue through the nation; and that a vast effort of spontaneous benevolence must be made to rescue our nation from barbarian ignorance and fiendish depravity. This auspicious work the several Christian denominations are attempting, with praiseworthy diligence, by efforts to educate a competent ministry, to multiply the Bible, to distribute tracts, to send out and sustain missionaries, and build churches, and bring our wandering millions under evangelical instruction.

And what do we hear but the outcry of a conspiracy to unite church and state? And these are the items of the evidence against us: We have a Bible society, sustained by all denominations, and have attempted to supply every family in the nation with Bibles; and this is one evidence of treason. We have a Sabbath-school Union, in which a million of children are taught to read and understand the Bible; and Sabbath-school libraries are springing up over the land: and this is another evidence of treason. We have an American Tract Society, to send out to every door, over city and land, fragments of knowledge, which, by larger books and libraries, would never be sent, — little portions of the bread of life, till the main supply can come up: and what do we hear but "Conspiracy!

conspiracy!" And our tracts are held up, and shaken in our faces, as evidence to strike us dumb. Yes, we have the audacity, in daylight, to print and give away tracts! Time would fail me to mention all the logical evidences of our guilt of this sort, with the publication and repetition of which the brazen throat of the lying trump of fame has been worn smooth and polished; or to describe the apparitions and frights which have danced in disturbed imaginations, over the land, like the gambols of witches in the days of yore.

Truly, it would be very convenient to an invading army, coming to take away our liberty, to fill the country with panic fear of their own soldiers, and to need no other evidence to confirm distrust, but to refer to their rifles, and bayonets, and excellent discipline, and ample munitions; and yet, such, and only such, are the proofs by which atheists would propagate the alarm of church and state union. But the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, whatever theirs may be, but spiritual — moral — the weapons of truth and reason, and fervent prayer, and universal action. We mean, by the moral influence of Christianity, to save both atheists and ourselves from ruin; and in what better or other way can we do it, than to be instant in season and out of season, to spread the Bible, and circulate tracts, and multiply ministers and missionaries to preach the Gospel? And yet it is this exercise of our rights, and performance of our republican and Christian duties,— doing just such things to promote Christianity and civil liberty as our accusers are doing to secure its destruction,— which they take up and propagate as evidence of treasonable designs.

But, by such evidence, what may not be proved? I can prove most conclusively that the farmers and manufacturers, merchants and mechanics, of this city, have formed a terrible

conspiracy to burn us all up. Is it not notorious that the farmers are collecting hay all summer, a very combustible material, which, all the fall and winter, they are bringing in and stowing away in certain places in the city? What can this be for, if it is not to set the city on fire? Then, the manufacturers are pouring in and crowding our stores with cotton goods, a most combustible material, reserved, no doubt, against the day of conflagration. What else can they be intended for? And then, we are credibly informed, by men who have been eye-witnesses of the fact, that there are hundreds of places in this city, where, day and night, men are employed in making shavings, which, added to the hay and cotton, would make a most horrible conflagration; and what else can they possibly make them for? And, as if this were not enough to burn us up, our steamboats are continually bringing in tar, and pitch, and turpentine, whose flames water cannot quench. And then, there are a number of banks, with great, deep, dark vaults, filled with money,— half as much as the Bible Society has stowed away to buy up for slaves the people of the United States. What else can the banks want money for, but to buy these materials to burn up the city? And we are credibly informed, that nearly every great city in the land is in the same perilous condition. Don't you think we had better put out the lights, and ring the bells? — Just as much cause for it as to ring the tocsin of alarm about church and state conspiracy to take away our liberties.

The bearing of these false accusations on the population of our great cities is especially terrific; for, to the multitude who believe them, they are, in their exasperating influence, the same as if the pious part of the nation were attempting to enslave them, and are calculated to rouse up in self-defence

those infuriated movements which shall bid defiance to law, and with the pavements of the streets batter down our institutions.

In monarchical governments, the political influence of cities is a match for the throne. Twice has France been revolutionized, and Europe shaken, by the good city of Paris; and London, had not the reform bill passed, had probably revolutionized England. In our own country, our cities wield no small portion of the political power of the nation: they are the depositories of the national capital, the channels of intercourse, the concentration of intellect, and enterprise, and physical power; which, if not bound to good behavior by the fear of God, and an unperverted public sentiment, no police can govern, no troops control. There, also, are magazines of woe, reserved for the day of vengeance; made up of ignorance, improvidence, and crime, and infuriated envy and wretchedness, at the disposal of irreligious and ambitious men.

It is a problem yet to be solved, whether, under a republican government, and within the reach of a perverted and profligate suffrage, the police of our cities can be permanently invested with power sufficient to execute the laws for the protection of life, and liberty, and property. By an all-pervading intellectual and moral culture it can be done; but without an efficient, constant, successful effort on this point, the floods of desolation will burst out and roll over us. The evangelization or demoralization of our cities may be the pivot on which our own and the world's destiny will turn.

With respect to the remedy for political atheism, a few things, before we close, may properly be said.

It is perfectly evident that we must not rely chiefly on legal protection and municipal regulations. This would be to perpetuate the mistake, to reap the disappointment, of all

past ages. The experiment of governing mind by force has been thoroughly made, and found abortive. The providence of God is emancipating mind, with reference to its ultimate universal government by intelligence, and moral influence, and public sentiment, acting under the guidance of Heaven and the sanctions of eternity.

Laws need not, cannot, be dispensed with. But exclusive reliance on them would inevitably be fatal. Their benign efficacy depends on a state of preparation, preceding their action, — upon moral culture and discipline, upon correct views, habits, and feelings, and an unperverted, powerful public sentiment; without which, Xerxes might as well chastise and chain the Hellespont, as laws attempt to control an undisciplined, turbulent community.

Particularly must all penal laws against atheism, and infidelity, and heresy, be forever impotent; for free inquiry is the birth-right and the duty of man, and the only condition of all-pervading truth, and intelligent self-government. In this age of universal action, men will think; and the more obstructions you multiply, the more will the obstructed tide rise, and burst out in wide-spread desolation. Penalties and force will not avail to repress error; and if they would, their adaptation is equal to repress the truth; and the perverted has, in all ages, been more frequent than the unperverted application. Laws and penalties have hindered more truth, and protected more error, than all causes beside. They have been the citadels of error, and batteries against the truth. If, as incident to free inquiry, there should be the busy licentiousness of the press in the propagation of error, it must be so,— it is, in this imperfect state, inseparable from civil and religious liberty. Nothing on earth is perfect; but the unrestrained collision of mind with mind is a lesser evil than coercive

attempts at regulation, and in its results the nearest approximation to a perfect condition of society of which human nature admits. It taxes the intellectual energies of the friends of Christianity and liberty, and brings out an energy of mind, and a blaze of truth, and an intensity of benevolent activity, which will, in its movements, produce a greater diffusion of correct opinion, and exalt society to a higher eminence than it otherwise would have attained, without the excitement and efforts created by resistance.

All these efforts, then, at perverting the mind and corrupting the heart of the nation, must be met by argument.

Truth is based on evidence, reason, and utility, while error has nothing to stand upon, and no weapons but sophistry for its defence; and if, with such vantage-ground, the friends of truth cannot, or will not, maintain their cause, they ought to perish in its ruins.

As atheism is at present the predominant type of the sceptical mania, those who are set for the defence of the truth, and all intelligent men, should be well versed in the whole argument for the being of a God, and in all the wily and popular sophistry by which it is assailed. The argument, as conducted by Paley, in his Natural Theology, is popular, and for all who will read it, and are willing to be convinced, may suffice. But, while the mania rages, many will breathe the infected atmosphere, who have no access to this particular antidote: the remedy needs, of course, a minuter form and a wider dispersion, and demands, at present, the more frequent agency of the pulpit, and the constant dropping of paragraphs in periodicals and newspapers, and the omnipresent instruction of facts.

In conversation, also, at home and by the way-side, it behooves the friends of truth — not only ecclesiastics, but lay-

men — to be able to give a reason for their Christian hope, and by sound argument to convince gainsayers; for the disease is as anti-philosophical as it is anti-Christian, and he is not worthy the name or the station of a patriot watchman, who does not descry the approaching evil, and set himself seriously to guard the community against its invasion.

This nation is destined to become universally a reading nation, and may be, by timely care, guarded efficaciously against the follies and mischiefs of political atheists: but care and effort are indispensable; for, since their discomfiture by Dwight and a host of others, a generation has arisen, to whom their cavils are now new, and the answers of other days unknown. The time was when Dwight ceased to preach upon the evidences of Christianity, so entirely had the mania of infidelity passed away; but, as if to take vengeance for past defeat, it has rushed by surprise upon the existing unarmed generation, and the battle must be fought over again, and probably for the last time, before that Wicked one will be destroyed by the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His coming.

But, to meet the exigencies of the new generation, the evidences of Christianity should be made familiar to the entire rising generation, from the pulpit, and in tracts,— in popular familiar argument,— and the little manuals formed for the libraries of every Sabbath and common school.

Especially is it important that the Bible should be studied and explained, in all our colleges and elevated schools,— its chronology, history, geography, mental philosophy, and natural history; its doctrines, arguments, eloquence, poetry, taste, inspiration, and the elementary principles of its interpretation.

The Bible, read and understood, is in no danger of losing

its ascendency, as an inspired book, over the understanding, and the conscience, and the heart. It is ignorance of the Bible which is the parent of infidelity, and gives to its specious arguments power over the common mind. A system of well-studied interpretation would sweep away every objection, and bring every knee to bow and every tongue to confess.

But argument alone is not all which the present exigency demands. The doctrines of political atheists are the consummation of folly, and ample justice cannot be done in defending the community against them, without the touch of irony, which shall take off their fair disguises, and exhibit their unsightly proportions and combinations. Truth can never be made ridiculous, but by caricature. Error can never be presented as it is, without the ludicrous; the more accurately and vividly you portray its elementary principles, the more you develop its absurdities, and cover it with ridicule. There is no malignity in this. The entire beauty and power of truth cannot be felt, but in the presence of the odious and ridiculous contrast; and public justice demands it. If the exhibition produce laughter, the fault is in the thing exhibited, not in the exhibiter. There are principles so ridiculous, that grave debate exalts them to a consequence of bad eminence, to which, otherwise, they could not attain; and in such case inspiration has directed us to answer a fool according to his folly. There is, on this subject, no small amount of incorrect opinion and fastidious feeling among good men, from not considering duly the place and use, and lawfulness and necessity, of ridicule. All diseases do not demand the caustic, but there are sores that will yield to nothing else. Ridicule is the most potent weapon with which Christianity is assailed; and there is no doubt, that, in its proper place, it is one of

the most powerful weapons of discomfiture to the assailant, and defence to the cause.

There is one other remedy more potent than all, — it is the united and emphatic decision of public sentiment against these irreligious and licentious opinions. There is nothing which these marauders so much fear, of which they so loudly complain, as their outlawry by public sentiment: they call it bigotry, malignancy, intolerance, and persecution.

The liberty they claim is the liberty of thinking as they please, without the responsibility of any reäcting opinion; of opening upon Christian societies and institutions their batteries of invective, ridicule, and denunciation, without the perils of a return fire; the right of universal denunciation, with the modest demand of universal approbation and eulogy. But we are not so fond of this moral martyrdom; and while we would not apply penal sanctions, God forbid that we should withhold the steady, withering frown of outraged and indignant virtue; — there is no other effectual resistance. Whenever the public discrimination between truth and error, and common sense and folly, and moral purity and pollution, shall falter, so that profligate men shall encounter no reproving eye, and irreligious men no reäction of the public mind, then are the flood-gates open, and the stream of pollution is rolling deep and rapid under the foundations of our institutions, and it will be but a moment before, like Babylon, they will sink never to rise.

I cannot close this lecture without calling around me, in imagination, and with feelings of great respect and affection, the laboring classes of this nation, whose religious and political faith these men would subvert.

My beloved countrymen: — If there is an eye in the universe that pities you, or a heart that feels for you, or a hand

stretched out for *your* protection especially, it is the eye and the heart and the hand of Heaven, — it is *your* cause that the Christian revelation espouses. No other religion ever cared for the common people, ever brought them within the reach of instruction, or ever elevated them to intelligence and competence and virtue. In all Pagan, Mahometan, and Papal lands, they are in deep darkness and in chains, beneath grievous burthens. It is the Bible, and the Sabbath, and the preaching of the Gospel, and the schools, and the virtue, and the enterprise, and the equality, which Christianity creates, which dispel the darkness, and open the prison door, and knock off the chains, and break off the yoke, and take off the burdens, which have in all nations and ages been the lot of persons in your condition.

Infidels are republicans in theory and in tongue, but not in deed and in truth. They are not your friends; but God *is* your friend. He has predicted and projected, and will accomplish, your elevation. Jesus Christ is your friend. He was born of virtuous and industrious parents in humble life; he performed your labors, felt your cares, bore in his own body your sorrows, and can be and is touched with the feeling of your infirmities. He knows how to emancipate and elevate you, and mitigate the curse which has for ages rested so heavily upon you. But these infidel philosophers are blind, ignorant, untaught, and unteachable masters; who, while they promise you liberty, are themselves the servants of sin; and while they offer to raise you, will thrust you down to deeper poverty, and reckless animalism and wretchedness.

What nation have they ever emancipated, but by a revolution more terrific than despotism? What well-ordered republic have they ever formed and maintained a single year? What

community have they enlightened and purified? Where are the schools and colleges, for the sons of the poor, which they have founded? What single family have they blessed with purer affections, and augmented industry, and domestic peace? What single heart have they ever made better by the extinction of evil passions and the nurture of benevolence? What vicious man have they reclaimed, what poor man have they made rich, what miserable man have they sustained by their philosophy, in life or in death?

Well meaning they may be, but it is the well meaning of ignorant and foolish men,—ignorant of the Bible, ignorant of history, ignorant of human nature, and of those moral causes which have always been auspicious or pernicious,—not knowing what they say, or whereof they affirm. Reckless are they of their own and of your best good; wanton, rash, and desperate are they in their experiments; moral maniacs, more utterly bereft of common sense than any other class of men who ever set up for guides, and challenged confidence. The evidence cannot be heightened of the falsehood and folly of their system. Should they propose a system of agriculture which reversed every one of the known principles of natural philosophy, it would not surpass the violence which their system does to the equally well-known and established laws of mind, society, and moral government. That righteousness, such as they despise, exalteth a nation, and sin, such as they eulogize, is the destruction of a people, is as certain as the laws of vision or of gravitation.

It is hard to elevate the mass, and harder to sustain it; and none, but by the help of God and his institutions, have been able to do it. Christianity is the world's last hope for civil liberty; if this will not diversify the results of national prosperity, then are we with rapid strides making for the precipice,

and preparing to bid a long farewell to all our liberty. You must reject these evil counsellors. You must appreciate the Bible, or you and yours will soon fall back into that state of hopeless ignorance, and poverty, and vice, from which there is no resurrection. The priestcraft which has darkened and enslaved the world is one which has rejected or sequestered the Bible; not that which gave it to the common people, and preached the Gospel to the poor. It is Christianity which introduces universal liberty, which equalizes and elevates, and it is its absence which puts you down. The conspiracy against your liberties is forming by those who would banish from you the day of rest, and intellectual and moral improvement, and doom you and your families to toil seven days instead of six without the least increase of remuneration. This it is which will dwarf the intellect of the laboring classes, and throw them back into the distance beyond the light of hope, and the reach of successful competition. If you wish to be free indeed, you must be virtuous, temperate, well instructed, with the door of honor and profit open to you, and to your children. As the sun draws up the whole body of the ocean it passes over, raising the tide in the career of his glorious way, so will the sun of righteousness take hold of you and your families, and raise them up, and bring them within the constant attraction of hope and virtue. Those who wish for the preservation of the Sabbath are not bigots; they do not seek a union of church and state; they seek the unextinguished lustre of that moral sun, for your sake, who with it will rise, and without it will go down to where all the laboring classes of the world have been, and now are, whom the Bible and the Sabbath have not emancipated and elevated.

It is the agriculturists, merchants, manufacturers, and day-laborers, of the nation, who must decide its destiny. It is

your hearts that must be the sanctuary of liberty; and your consciences that must stand sentinel, to prevent her perversion; and your bodies that must constitute a rampart around those holy and blessed institutions of heaven which God has given to man in the Bible, — whose blessings our fathers, with toil and blood, purchased, — which, with augmenting prosperity at every step, have come down, and are now encompassing us like the waves of the sea,—blessings, which urge themselves upon us, and from which we cannot flee, and whose blest intrusion we cannot resist, but by taking counsel to break the bands of Christ, and cast away his cords from us. We need not petition Congress to spare the Sabbath: if they do, the people can desecrate the sacred day. The people must decide, each man for himself and his family, whether they will live under the government of God, and enjoy its sunshine, and breathe its liberty, and be elevated by its power, and sanctified by its purity, and cheered by its exuberant, unnumbered, and inexhaustible blessings; or, go back to the midnight of ignorance, and the bondage of corruption.

LECTURE V.

THE ATTRIBUTES AND CHARACTER OF GOD.

And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty ; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

GREAT errors in doctrine result usually from mistaken conceptions of the attributes and character of God. There are two extremes to which the mind is liable: the one is to regard the Divine Being only in his public character, as the lawgiver of the universe; and his power, and wisdom, and goodness, only as they are manifested in his public relations in the government of a sinful world.

In one view, all which is dark, and terrible, and irresistible, is gathered about him; all which is spotless in purity, and vehement in his hatred of sin, and inexorable in its punishment. He is surrounded by fire, and storms, and earthquakes, and pestilence, and war, — the symbols of present and coming wrath, — his eye is fixed on public justice, and his heart glows with a benevolence too vast to hold sympathetic communion with the guilty and the miserable.

Though there is some truth in these views, in their place and proportion, they are not the whole truth, and therefore

misrepresent the character of God almost as fearfully as if they were false. They constitute a dark cloud, behind which all heaven's artillery is put into action, to extinguish hope, and keep a rebel world in a state of terror and reckless desperation.

And they are doubly injurious, because, ever since the Fall, the fear of God has usurped the place of filial confidence, and has been excessive. A dread of him is upon the mind of guilty man, which, in imitation of the first pair, leads him to flee and hide from his presence.

In all false religions, fear has ever been the predominant principle of worship, and rage and cruelty the principles to be appeased. And even where the light of the Gospel has shined, and its voice has proclaimed peace, the quaking and standing afar off has not ceased. God, to the eye of guilt and unbelief, appears too great, too distant, and too much engrossed with his vast concerns of state, and too holy and too just, to inspire with confidence the guilty, and bring them with humble boldness near. It is the object, therefore, of God, in the Gospel, *to reässure his ruined guilty creatures of his unextinguished kindness* FOR THEM, *and to bring them back, reconciled and forgiven, to his fellowship and favor.*

It is, no doubt, important that man should be well certified of the holiness and justice of God; and that ultimately he will, by no means, clear the guilty. But, to overcome the panic, and bring the full and saving power of the Gospel upon alienated mind, it is not less important that sinners should be made to feel that God loves and pities them, than that he abhors sin, and will not fail to punish it. Compassion alone would create presumption, and justice alone, desperation. The mingled influence of both is needed to alarm the sinner

to flee from wrath, and to allure him with humble boldness to fly to God by Jesus Christ.

But instead of this justly balanced exhibition, many rush into the opposite extreme. They divest the Most Holy entirely of public responsibilities, regarding him only in the capacity of a benevolent individual, consulting alone the direct impulse of kind feeling, without any reference to general consequences. They cancel all the public responsibilities of God to the universe, as its moral governor. With the magic wand of unbelief, they dispel the darkness round about his throne, and put out the fires, and stop the mighty thunderings and the voice of the trumpet, and array with smiles the face of Heaven alike upon the righteous, and the wicked — destined, by dint of omnipotence, to those transformations which shall consummate their meetness for heaven, and make them happy.

The fact is too evident to be denied, that both the majestic and terrific, the gentle and the winning exhibitions of the divine character, are contained in the Bible, and are correct exhibitions of the divine mind, as its attributes and character are developed in the creation and government of the intelligent universe. In the administration of moral government, there is occasion also for these seemingly opposite attributes and exhibitions of character. They are harmonious, and indispensable to a perfect character, and to the administration of a perfect moral government.

It will be the object, therefore, of this lecture, to give a concise account of the attributes and character of God, as disclosed in his works, and revealed in his word.

This will be especially important, because correct conceptions of the relations of God to the universe, as its lawgiver,— of his providence, as the administration of a moral govern-

ment, — of his word, as a system of remedial legislation for the recovery to holiness of lost subjects; and correct definitions of his attributes, natural and moral, as displayed in this great work, — include a large portion of the elementary principles of theology; while false conceptions of his attributes and character hang sackcloth about the sun of righteousness, and break the mainspring of his government. We observe, then: —

1. That God is a spirit.

By spirit, we do not mean that nondescript, unthinking, undesigning energy, denominated Nature, — that all-pervading soul of the universe, the fountain of effervescence and fermentation, the volcanic centre of emanation, and subsequent attraction and absorption, the flint and steel for the scintillation of mind, to fall back, in due time, into the form of fixed caloric. Such mysticism we abandon to those who can comprehend it, or love to dream amid the repetition of beautiful uncertain sounds, and glittering, undefined images.

By spirit we mean mind, as opposed to matter; exhibiting intelligence, acting by design, as opposed to instinct; and diversified volition, in the view of motives, as opposed to an unthinking, irresistible necessity; mind capable of intense desire, of permanent choice in the selection of its chief good, and of plan and subordinate volition and action for the attainment of its object; capable of copious affections, and social affinities, and high enjoyment, and in subjects of government by law and by the rewards and punishments of an eternal state.

Of the essence of mind or matter, we say nothing, because we know nothing; all that we know of either being disclosed by their attributes, as displayed in cause and effect. That they are different existences we conclude, because they disclose no attributes in common, and all their phenomena are different

and opposite; so that it might as well be insisted that matter is spirit, as that mind is matter; there being no foundation for saying either, but all possible evidence to the contrary. The only evidence of different material substances is their different effects; and if the different phenomena of mind and matter do not evidence different existences, there is no evidence to disprove the perfect homogeneity and identity of all things.

2. God is eternal.

We have seen that something is eternal, or nothing could have begun to be; and that this eternal *something* cannot be matter. For inert matter cannot produce organization, such as exists in plants, trees, animals, and the human body; it could not produce the motions of the planets in their orbits, and the revolving of the earth upon her axis; much less could matter produce mind, feeling, perception, intellect, design, desire, will, affections and executive energy; — but such minds exist, of recent origin, and limited duration upon earth. Such existences matter could not produce, but only that Mind whose invisible attributes, natural and moral, are "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, — even his *eternal* power and Godhead."

3. God is self-existent.

The meaning is not that God is self-created, which would be a contradiction; or that he is self-sustained, implying that his existence depends on his own voluntary effort to perpetuate his being: but that his existence is underived, and independent of external causes, and as incapable of cessation as of beginning; that his continuance no more depends on choice, than his underived, eternal being; and that unending, unchanged existence belongs to the very nature of God, as really as dependence and mutability belong to all which is

created. This is the testimony of reason; for why should that which is underived, and independent of any outward cause, and has existed from eternity, ever cease to be? It is also the testimony of the Bible: "I am that I am." "With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God."

4. God is omniscient.

He knows all real and all possible things. Otherwise there would be no evidence of the absolute perfection and the immutability of his purposes and their execution. For if all that is possible to infinite wisdom, and goodness, and power, were not open and naked before him, he might form defective plans, and make discoveries and changes by experience. But before he commenced creation, "known unto God were all his works." The immensity of the diversified possibility of things lay open before him; from the entire of which, wisdom and goodness selected the system which should be. To this system, in all its attributes, parts, dependencies, and movements and results, his knowledge extends, through all its existence of past, present, and future.

It does not, however, follow from this, as some have supposed, that to the divine mind there is no such thing as the succession of events, and that to him, present, past, and future, are *one eternal now*. That there are no successive developments of knowledge to the divine mind, is certain. That all truths and facts were present to the mind of God, from eternity, and are always present, none can doubt; but then his knowledge is correct knowledge. He sees things as they *are*. Unless, therefore, all events coëxist, and are *actually* one eternal now, they cannot appear to be so to God, without supposing his mind to be under a palpable delusion. There is a difference — a real, actual difference — between past,

and present, and future; between an event which has come to pass, and one which is yet to be; and, no doubt, to the divine mind, while all existence is known constantly and clearly, as if it were present before him, it is known as actual existence only in the order in which it becomes such. The relations of past, present, and future existence are real, and therefore are as real to the divine mind as to human minds.

The omniscience of God is taught in the Bible, in language worthy of the theme, and of the Mind who moved the holy men of old to give it utterance. "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! He knoweth all things; He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him."

5. God is omnipresent.

This is to be understood only of his knowledge and constant efficiency throughout all his works. Of the essence of spirit, if there be such a thing, distinct from its developed attributes, we know nothing, and the Scriptures say nothing. That God fills immensity as matter occupies space, is not the form in which his omnipresence is taught in the Bible; but that, as the human mind exerts its wisdom, and benevolence, and powers, on all parts of the material system it inhabits, in like manner, the energy of the divine mind extends constantly to the upholding and government of the entire universe.

The ubiquity of the divine inspection, support, and government, extends alike both to the natural and moral universe, to matter and to mind, to physical and to moral government; it being to Jehovah just as practicable to execute his purposes of moral government by moral influence, as to control the material movements of the universe by his direct omnipotence. The omnipresence of God is most forcibly and most beautifully taught in the following language of the 139th Psalm:

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

6. God is almighty.

He can do all things which are in their nature possible.

Contradictions are impossibilities. To cause a thing to be, and not to be, at the same time, is an impossibility. To make a circle square, and a square round; to make happiness misery, and misery happiness; to make selfishness and envy right, and benevolence wrong; to make matter spirit, or spirit matter; or to govern each by the same laws and means: — *all* these would be *contradictions* — things impossible to any power. But *in respect to things possible*, "*all* things are possible" with God. His power is infinite and unlimited. There is in it no deficiency to accomplish any possible thing, and no obstacle to hinder or make it difficult. The entire field of universal possibility is open to his power. He is the

Lord God Almighty, the Scriptures affirm, and his works declare it. He can create, — can originate being, — can command a universe to arise up around him, where before emptiness and silence reigned.

It is to be observed, that the power of God is, in its exercise, always associated with infinite wisdom and benevolence, and is limited only by the wise and benevolent constitution which God has given to things, and the laws which he has adopted for their most perfect government. There is nothing in its nature possible which God cannot do; and yet, there are innumerable things, in their nature possible to be done, which God will not do, because it would not be possible to bring them in as parts of the wisest and best system; because, without abandoning the wisest and best system, he *could not do them*. He could, so far as power is concerned, pardon sin without an atonement; but he could not make it a wise and benevolent act, in the administration of the best possible system of moral government. He is as able, so far as power is concerned, to utter falsehood as truth. But he is not able, and no power is competent, to make falsehood as wise and benign, in moral government, as immutable truth.

It is to be remembered that the power of God in the government of the natural and moral world corresponds always with the nature of the subject: the one, he governs by his power acting on the attributes which he has given to matter; the other, by his power acting upon mind, through the intervention of motives contained in his law, gospel, and providence, and administered and made effectual by his Spirit. In the material universe, he can do all which his perfect plan demands by his power direct on matter; and in the world of intellect, and free agency, and accountability, he can do all by his laws and providence, and their administration by his

Spirit, which his hand and counsel has determined to be done. He never decreed to govern the sun by the ten commandments, nor to govern free, accountable mind by direct irresistible omnipotence.

7. God is good.

The preceding are his natural attributes, which appertain to his being, independent of choice, and are desirable or terrible as they are employed in the dissemination of good or evil. Happiness and misery are the two opposites — the good and the evil of the universe: and natural causes are useful or pernicious as they produce the one or the other; and intelligent beings are benevolent or malignant as they prefer the one to the other, and consecrate their powers to its extension and perpetuity.

Benevolence, then, is the love of doing good — of communicating and perpetuating enjoyment.

In the divine being, it is not one of several attributes, but his entire moral nature — the generic principle of his glorious moral excellence. It is not an instinct, but an enlightened preference of good to evil, and of doing good to doing evil. It is not a blind impulse of some irresistible fatality. God is a free agent, and, in the selection of his own chief end, acts as voluntarily as his creatures, in the selection of their chief end. He exists by necessity, and all his natural attributes are independent of his choice. But his moral excellence is, in its fountain, and in all its streams, perfectly voluntary. There are intelligences who are selfish; they seek their own exclusively. The communication of good is not their supreme desire. They are like the vortex which swallows all which falls within its scope, crying, Give, and never saying, It is enough. They find no pleasure in the communication of good, as their chief end, but rather in its monopoly. But the

divine mind is like an ocean, of immeasurable circumference, unfathomable depth, and inexhaustible fulness, ever spontaneously overflowing in the communication of enjoyment.

This benevolence of God, though vast, is also minute in its inspection, and impartial in its administration. All beings are regarded with good will, according to their capacity, and with complacency, according to their character and deeds.

It includes, of course, his own well-being, as comprehending the greatest good; and the well-being of the universe, as involved in the stability of his counsels, and the prosperity of his kingdom; and extends to every creature capable of enjoyment, from angel to insect, with an impartiality which none but God himself can graduate.

It is a benevolence which is pure and unmingled. In convalescent human nature, it exists in alliance with great defects of passion, and selfishness, and pride; but in God it is not so. There is no spot on his sun. God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all; and pure as crystal are the waters which flow from the throne of God and the Lamb.

The benevolence of God is also infinite. It is great like his power, and immense like his being.

All created intellect, condensed into one mind, would be but a ray compared with the eternal mind; and all the benevolence which warms the hearts of holy beings, united, would constitute but a drop, when compared with the ocean of his love. It is a height, and depth, and length, and breadth, which cannot be comprehended.

It is also a principle of omnipotent, constant, eternal action. It is the nature of mind to act, and the blessedness of benevolent minds to act in doing good; and it is in his

untiring, uninterrupted benevolent activity that he is God over all, blessed forever.

8. God is just.

The justice of God is his benevolence and wisdom, expressed in the administration of rewards and punishments, for the public good, according to the character and deeds of his subjects.

The existence of intelligent beings and accountability is indispensable to the greatest amount of enjoyment; and law is indispensable to the propitious government of mind; and reward and punishment are indispensable to the moral influence of law. Were God, then, to create a universe of mind, capable of enjoyment, and pressed by desire, and its own impatient activity, without guidance and competent motive to render obedience reasonable, and sin inexcusable, it would be no evidence of goodness, but rather of cruelty; and to annex sanctions which are never to be realized, would be to set forth the form of government without the power.

Justice in God is not, then, as to many it would seem, a dark, frowning attribute, — a stern, unfeeling severity, — but the benevolent, conservatory principle of the universe, by which the Lord God Almighty maintains the empire of righteousness, and extends around him the blessedness of an eternal day. Were the governing intelligence of the universe impotent and indolent, or cruel, or capricious, or partial, his administration might well be dreaded. But while benevolence and mercy are mingled with justice, and not a stroke of the rod falls which incorrigible wickedness and the public good do not render just and indispensable, none but determined rebels have cause to fear.

Is justice in human governments a cold-hearted despotism? Who does not call for it, when his character is assailed, when

his rights of property are invaded, or his life is threatened, or when public insurrections threaten to put an end to the safeguard of law? And no class of men are more eulogized, as the benefactors of mankind, than those of incorruptible integrity and unflinching courage, who hold the balance even on the judgment seat. No good man has any pleasure in the punishment of a sinning fellow-being; but he has pleasure in the public purity and happiness, which the prostration of law and the prevalence of anarchy would destroy.

What should we think of the chief magistrate of a nation, sworn to see that the commonwealth receives no detriment, smitten with such tender-heartedness for pirates and robbers as would let out desolation to sweep over land and sea, because he could not find it in his heart to punish the guilty? There is nothing but justice which stands between any government, human or divine, and contempt and anarchy. And can it be thought desirable and amiable in God, that he should lay aside the sword, and turn a face of smiles alike on the evil and the good, in this world of moral madness and self-destruction?

Is it considered that the most wretched possible condition of human beings is that in which judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, and truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter? — that the most lovely feature of a republic is the mild but efficient administration of equal laws, — and the most repelling feature in despotism is its injustice, — and the most intolerable scourge of anarchy its injustice, — and that the most terrific circumstance in the world of woe is its outlawry from all protection and benefit from the moral government of God, and its abandonment to unrestrained malignity and everlasting anarchy?

9. God is merciful.

Mercy is the exercise of benevolence in the reformation and forgiveness of the guilty, in ways consistent with the influence of law, and the safety of the intelligent universe.

In a state of loyalty, the divine benevolence flows full and unobstructed to every individual. Transgression, while it does not extinguish his good will, renders the practical expression of it impracticable, and demands the interposition of penal evil for the protection of law and order.

The Atonement, received by faith, places the subject in such relations to Christ, as that public justice does not demand his punishment, or forbid his forgiveness and restoration to favor; it opens wide the channel which sin had obstructed, for his mercy to flow in; and God, who has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, — who never punishes merely because it is deserved, but always only because the public good demands it, — now, released from the public necessity of punishment, in the exercise of mercy, through the Atonement, freely pardons the believer, and receives him into favor. Mercy, then, is the personal benevolence of Jehovah, flowing in unison with the public good, in the reformation and forgiveness of lost men. It is a mercy, however, which always sees to it that the commonwealth receives no detriment, and which moves only in the train of public justice satisfied, and the public good protected.

In close alliance with mercy, it may be added, that God is slow to anger, and of great patience.

Human passions are ascribed to God, not as *identical* with what exists in the divine mind, but as analogical. The metaphor has always some resemblance to that which it represents. Between anger as ascribed to God and to man, there is the coincidence of strong disapprobation, and emphatic action in the infliction of evil; but with this difference, that in man the

impulse is malignant, while in God it is benevolent. In man it is personal revenge; in God it is public justice for benevolent purposes.

Long-suffering *implies* that public justice does not always demand the immediate execution of the deserved evil, and that always God is disposed to defer the infliction as long, and to continue the means of reformation as long, as the public good will permit.

We may not omit to add that God is full of compassion.

Compassion is sympathy for the afflicted and miserable. But such is the immensity of the divine nature, and the extent of his creation, and the magnitude and number of his worlds and works, and the majesty and fulness of his benevolence, as it flows in the channels of his general laws, that single minds are tempted to feel as if the heart which guides the universe, and wakes about the Throne the song, and pours through eternity the tide of joy, could not stoop to hear the sigh of secret sorrow, or move with sympathetic compassion and personal friendship for the distressed; and much less, that He in whose sight the heavens are not clean, will look down with affectionate compassion upon the guilty and ill-deserving. Nor is it till we have considered the adaptation of his capacity to the minutest as well as to the greatest of his works, and the condescension of his benevolence to the most limited as well as to the greatest capacities he has formed, and, added to these, the reiterated declaration of his compassion contained in his Word, — that we can bring home, realizingly and efficaciously, the sense of his presence with us, and constant benignant care, and quick and real sympathy. But it is only as the vastness of his being, the extent of his works, the glory of his laws and moral government, and of their administration, are considered, — in alliance with all the

nearness and tenderness of parental affection, — that the entire character of God comes out upon the soul, and all his claims to our confidence and love are felt, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin is realized, and the riches of his goodness apprehended in providing a Redeemer, — and with such a sacrifice of feeling to himself and to his Son as must be implied in giving him up to suffering and to death, that we might be delivered from shame, and live forever.

It is the concentration of these majestic and touching traits of the divine character, — this union of the vast with the minute, of strength with tenderness, of justice with mercy, and self-existent blessedness with the most gentle movements of compassion and sympathy, — which melts instantly the heart it touches, and renders the moral power of the Gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, omnipotent. Nor is it to be anticipated that, until the clouds of a false philosophy about the character of God are dispelled, and its full-orbed mildness and radiance and power are let out upon the world, — nation after nation will fall down before him, as the sun of righteousness rolls his subduing light over the earth, encountering little opposition, and leaving in his train nothing but loyalty and praise.

But, to hold up our faith to these blessed visions of the divine character, and to arm our ministry and the exhortations and prayers of the Church with power, we shall do well to remember that the greatness of the power and wisdom and goodness of God, is illustrated in the formation of minds, — every one of which, as lost or saved, and subject to the endless and augmenting knowledge of good or evil, is of more importance than the entire material universe.

The condition of a perverted mind is also well calculated to lay hold upon the susceptibilities of benevolence; and of none

more than of the mind of Him who formed the ruined agent, and comprehends the good rejected and the evil chosen, the amplitude of the remedy, the urgent sincerity of its offer, and the voluntariness of its rejection, — while the incorrigible ingrate is moving onward to the crisis of a confirmed and everlasting madness, where insatiable desire, and pinching famine, and wounded pride, and rankling envy, and fear, and ferocious hate, and terror, and sinking of heart, and lamentation, and despair, will occupy the ever-coming periods of duration.

Miserable innocence, exposed only to temporary evils, would not fail to participate in the compassion of the Deity; but how much more moving are the exhibitions of miserable guilt, exposed to evils which will never end, and obstinately regardless of deliverance.

Nor does the immensity of the divine mind, or the extent of its supervision, disqualify or disincline for minute, constant, and kind attention.

When He projected creation, he understood his resources, and has not set for himself a task too hard. The Almighty fainteth not, neither is weary; and the Watchman of Israel never slumbers, but superintends, with equal ease, the orbs whose being we learn from the telescope, and those minutest mites of animated being which the microscope brings up to our knowledge from the downward distance. Minute and great are alike in respect to the adaptation of his powers, or the claims of mind on his benevolence.

It is consistent with the purity of his holiness, and his public character as the supreme executive of the universe, that he should feel compassion for the miserable and the guilty. It implies no complacency in sinful character, and no faltering of purpose in respect to the claims of public

justice, but renders his administration more lovely, sure, and terrible to the incorrigible, — that it is the unchanging award of a benevolence full of compassion, but yet will by no means clear the guilty.

It is compassion, mingled with parental government and discipline, which gives it loveliness and tone. It is compassion, in human governments, mingling with justice, which takes off the appearance of cruelty, and makes rulers a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well.

Nor need our faith in the compassion of the Deity be shaken by the strong and terrible expressions contained in the Bible, of his abhorrence of sin, — his anger, wrath, fury, and unalterable determination to punish it. Metaphors express analogies, but not exact identity. There must be points of resemblance, to render one thing the symbol of another; and how are conceptions of the movements of the divine mind to be communicated, but by the aid of some analogous movement of the human mind, with which we are acquainted? Now, anger includes strong moral disapprobation, and a strong purpose of inflicting evil, only with this difference, — that in man malignity and revenge is the spring of action, while in God it is benevolence in the form of public justice. It is, then, a suitable, forcible, terrific imagery, to speak of God as angry, wroth, incensed, full of indignation and fury. But it expresses only, by the power of metaphor, the strength of his aversion to sin, the intensity of his purpose to punish it, and the terrible effects of public justice when the work of desolation shall begin. Anger, in God, is not malignant feeling; not any thirsting for the blood of the slain; not any pleasure in suffering, or an opportunity to inflict it; nothing which

will prevent compassion, even while the tide of desolation rolls; nothing which will obscure the bow, and a smiling sky, to him that is humble and of a contrite heart, and believeth in Jesus.

Nor is the exercise of compassion inconsistent with the blessedness of God, if to any it should seem to be so. God understands his own character; and we are not permitted to thrust up the lamp of our philosophy, to prove that he has misdescribed his capabilities and emotions. But the delicate and tender susceptibilities of a mighty mind would appear to be as indispensable to its enjoyment as vast emotions of unmingled pleasure; and quite indispensable to its fellowship with created minds, and especially so, to revive the confidence, and reëstablish the loyalty of the dismayed, alienated, jealous, fearful hearts of a ruined world. How sweet is the voice of mercy to the desperate or despondent mind — how soul-subduing the notes of divine compassion on the ear of guilt — how sweet the tender cords of love, drawing the soul into fellowship with Heaven, while, as yet, it half believeth not for joy! But it is enough that, in believing in the sympathetic affections of the divine mind, we do not follow philosophy or fables, but divine testimony. God, who cannot lie, has caused it to be written, that he is God over all, blessed forever; and at the same time that he is full of compassion, not willing that any should perish, but desiring sincerely that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus.

LECTURE VI.

THE NECESSITY OF A REVELATION FROM GOD TO MAN.

I REMEMBER the time when there was no such thing as infidelity openly advocated in our land. It was imported from France during the Revolutionary war. The first public assault that was made upon the Bible was by Thomas Paine, in his Age of Reason. It went like an electric shock through the land, and, for a time, unsettled the confidence of many. But an era of prayer, and discussion, and revivals of religion, speedily followed, and the tide of infidelity ebbed; until, after about six or eight years, there was no longer any ostentatious display of infidel opinions in high places, and scarcely at all anywhere; and the name of infidel was no longer coveted as indicative of knowledge, or talent, or courage. Since then the epidemic has revived, and extended to large classes of society not usually affected by it — the laboring classes; and, by the circulation of tracts, and continued boasting declamation, the advocates of infidelity have turned their footsteps to the farm and work-shop, — well knowing that if they could succeed in depositing their poison there, a copious harvest would ensue.

The danger of the working men of our nation does not arise from any prejudice against Christianity peculiar to them; but objections are thrust upon them, and cavils are insinuated, of the most injurious kind, which they know not how to answer;

while sneers are hurled at religion, which, like envenomed arrows, inflict wounds they know not how to heal. In attempting to provide a remedy, we have attended to the evidence of the being, character and attributes of God, and the injurious tendencies of atheism and scepticism.

We now call your attention to the subject of a revelation containing the laws and institutions of the moral government of God. And if we cannot discover them by reason, and the light of nature, we must look for them in a revelation from God.

It is evident, from the slightest inspection, that man was not made to be regulated and governed by his instincts, appetites, and passions. For, while these may guide animals safely, in men left to themselves, they carry desolation and ruin through society.

But where shall such conservatory guidance be found, adequate to the elevation and perfection of the entire social state? To enlighten and elevate a few, has been found practicable in many nations, — in Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome, — but nowhere have the masses been enlightened and purified, and made to rise. Egypt, with her towering obelisks and massy pyramids, was advanced in aristocratic civilization; but while her kings and nobles rolled in splendor, her degraded millions toiled their life out for the food which sustained them, wasting their days unpitied in her vast quarries, in rearing the monuments of oppression and folly; and, could we give the statistics of the coarse food, clothing, habitations, and small earnings, of the laboring classes of modern Europe, we should perceive what broad foundations the mountains of prey stand upon. In fact, a terrific gravitation has marked the masses of our world, when bereft of revelation. No power of reason, or philosophy,

or the energy of government, has been able to bid them rise.

What is the matter?

Has the past history of the world been such as might have been anticipated from the unperverted wisdom and goodness of God? It has rather been a history of ignorance, despotism, pollution, and crime. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain until now.

Six thousand years have rolled away, and have inscribed on every page of their sad history the insufficiency of the light of nature, and the necessity of a revelation from God for the present and future well-being of man. But we have a book which claims to be from God, sent to us in compassion, for the illumination and salvation of our race. This book contains the predictions of a coming day, when the history of our race shall be reversed, and the whole world enlightened, purified, and blessed, by the dominion of Christ over the hearts and lives of men. The fact predicted, Christians and sceptics both profess to believe. The one, from the efficacy of the Christian religion; the other, from the power of reason and philosophy, in the arrangement of circumstances.

The principal ground of doubt concerning a revelation from God is the alleged sufficiency of the light of nature. And, doubtless, if the light of nature is sufficient, a revelation would be superfluous. For, though God is almighty, he is not wont to abound in vast superfluous efforts.

It will, therefore, be the object of this lecture to show that a revelation from God to man is indispensable to his temporal and eternal well-being. To accomplish this, we shall present in contrast the defects of the light of nature, and the adaptation and power of the Bible.

1. The light of nature has never been sufficient to main-

tain, practically, the evidence of God's being and character, or to prevent the prevalence of a cruel and corrupting idolatry. The heavenly bodies, departed heroes, animals, reptiles, and gods of wood and stone, have been the objects of national worship, the constituents of which, in all time, have been lust and blood. The temple has been a brothel, a slaughter-house, and sink of pollution, on whose altars human sacrifices have, in all nations, mingled their blood with the blood of animals, — and extensively infanticide, and the burning of widows on the funeral pile, have constituted a revolting part. But what has the light of nature done to reverse the condition of the pagan world? Nothing.

These reverses, wherever they exist, have been exclusively the achievements of the Gospel and Christian institutions. And yet infidelity is now hailed as the rising of a new sun upon the world, to dispel its darkness and wash away its pollutions, and emancipate the enslaved devotees of superstition, and elevate the priest-ridden millions to intelligence and virtue. But on what page of history are such triumphs of nature's light recorded, in elevating and purifying the masses of society? Is there no priestcraft in pagan nations, and no dark-minded, priest-ridden people? The priests of pagan worship are multitudinous, and their control, through ignorance and fear, despotic, and the expense of worship exorbitant. The price of their temples in a pagan nation would educate the people; and yet it is no part of the object of their priesthood to enlighten, but rather to continue the degradation of the human mind, that themselves may reap the harvest of ignorance and superstition. Get rid of priestcraft by the extermination of Christianity? It is Christianity, with her ministry and institutions, alone, which keeps off those birds of night that fill the pagan world with fear and trembling,

and restrains those floods of pollution which have swept over the world, wherever Christianity has not bestowed her light, and her efficient guardian care.

2. In the absence of the Christian religion, no just conceptions of the providential government of God have prevailed. Events have been ascribed to chance, to fate, or immutable certainty in the nature of things; or to myriads of local gods, inhabiting earth, air, and sea, polluting the world by their example, and agitating it by their quarrels and capricious wrath, —

> "Gods hateful, changeful, petulant, unjust,
> Whose attributes are rage, revenge and lust."

3. In the absence of the Bible, a dark uncertainty has prevailed respecting the immortality of the soul in a future state. The Greeks and Romans had their "Elysian Fields," where the spirits of their mighty dead assembled to talk over the deeds of time; and their Tartarus, a place of punishment for the vulgar wicked.

But the whole system was rejected by the intelligent, as the mere fiction of poets, and the device of priests and legislators, — despised by the inventors, and countenanced only for gain and popular restraint. Whether the soul were immortal or not, men of the most powerful minds, and extended research, and patient thought, could not tell, but believed, and hoped, and *feared*, with that uncertainty which always attends opinions of whose truth there exists no means of becoming sure.

4. The light of nature has never developed and maintained a correct and universal system of morals.

The mind of man is too limited, and experience is too slow, and the obliquities of the heart are too many and powerful, to

lay out a pure and comprehensive chart of universal, practical, relative duty; and, though a common necessity has compelled the world, in self-defence, to stigmatize some actions as wrong and others right, yet scarcely a vice can be named, which has not, in pagan lands, been canonized as an act of religion, or enrolled among the virtues. Ambition, pride, falsehood, theft, murder, and the most debasing impurities, and the most unnatural crimes, have been sanctioned and approved. The best men in pagan history were, with few exceptions, men, who, in Christian lands, would be regarded as stained by practices of flagrant immorality. And yet they shone as lights, amid the darkness around them; and as examples of purity, amid the mass of deeper pollution by which they were environed.

5. Beyond the pale of the Christian revelation, the life and comfort of man have been held in light estimation, and sported with for revenge, ambition, or gain, or as the means of pleasurable amusement. The gladiatorial shows, the treatment of women, the abandonment of infants by their parents and of parents by their children, the treatment of slaves, and contempt and oppression of the common people by the rich and learned, are confirmations strong of this position.

6. The light of nature has no sanctions sufficient to form and sustain a pure and happy state of society.

The experience of a whole world shows that the constitutional advantages of virtue, and evils of crime, are impotent for the formation of moral principle, and a pure and efficacious public sentiment, against presumptuous wickedness. Human laws are limited and feeble in their power to reform and elevate society. A large portion of the virtue on which the happiness of families and of communities depends cannot be produced by coercion; and a large portion of the violations of

right, and invasion of public and domestic purity, peace, and happiness, cannot be restrained by human laws. They cannot reach the heart, nor provide motives, nor regulate the thoughts, nor prevent the conception of sinful desires. Amid a world prone to sin, and rushing headlong with passion and appetite, they can only prohibit and punish *actions;* and of these only such as can be proved in a court of justice, and probably not one of a thousand which war upon personal rights and happiness, and social safety and order.

There is no omniscient God of purity whose eye is ever open on the hearts and thoughts and words and actions of transgressors; and no throne of justice, from which there is no flight; and no Almighty power, with which none can contend, and no certainty of sufferings endless, the wages of sin, which none can endure or escape.

7. Another defect of the light of nature is, that it has no institutions, and no authorized teachers of piety and morality, for the repetition of known truths, and the application of motives, for the instruction and reformation of the mass of mankind.

Suppose that we had from nature all the light that revelation could give us. Suppose that the light of nature should unroll its broad page athwart the sky, whereon, in letters of fire, should be written every precept of the moral law, and every motive to divert from sin, and secure holiness and happiness. What would be the result? Men would gaze a few times upon its burning page, till it became familiar, and then disregard it. We need a living voice, and institutions, for the repetition of instruction. Miracles themselves, were they habitual, would lose their power, and become familiar as the stated laws of nature; even the Bible itself, sustained as it is by miracles, would not be sufficient. Its truths must be

periodically and often reiterated and applied by those whose office it is to cry aloud and reiterate instruction and motive.

Undeniably, therefore, we need a day set apart for universal convocation, and for the express purpose of receiving repetitious instruction, and the reiteration of motives and impressions. This only would keep up the moral tone of society, and render the truths of revelation an habitual and efficacious reality.

But the light of nature provides no such institutions for the moral and religious instruction of mankind, — no Sabbath of rest for the body, or of moral culture for the mind; and has no authority and no influence to induce mankind to lay aside the cares of this world, and convoke them for the worship of God, and the education of the soul for heaven. It is only by such means that the masses of mankind have ever been elevated to intelligence and virtue; and this has been done only in Christian lands, and undeniably by the efficacy of Christian institutions.

Admit that a few men of transcendent powers might grasp a correct system of religion and morals; their discoveries would not supersede the necessity of a revelation, and they could not give ubiquity to their knowledge. Much is said of the attainments of the ancient philosophers. Suppose they did attain all the wisdom and virtue that is ascribed to them; there were but a few of them in an age; and what could three, or four, or twenty school-masters, in a generation, do to educate the people of the United States? Suppose all the mathematics of his day had been confined to Newton; what would have become of the science in the generation succeeding him? It will not do to talk of Socrates or Plato, two or three dim stars that two thousand years ago shone with a greater brightness than the world around them, only

because that world lay in such total darkness. These philosophical teachers stood upon an eminence, and around them might cluster a few disciples, while all the rest of mankind remained in the valley of the shadow of death. But the Christian religion provides teachers for the great body of mankind, and it is the only religion that does. If we read history, this fact stands out on every page. Even in the great and civilized Roman empire, the most polished and wealthy at one time on earth, no one thought of such a thing as educating the despised and oppressed people, whom they sneeringly called the "ignobile vulgus." It was not supposed that artisans, mechanics, agriculturists, and sailors, — composing now that immense body of useful and respected citizens, — could be improved in their morals, and elevated in their characters, by acquiring knowledge, and by comprehending general truths. They were utterly left out of the question, and were looked upon almost as of a different race from the highborn and wealthy patrician. They were consigned over to the ignorance and debasement of uninstructed, uncared-for human nature; and philosophers and satirists spoke of them and ridiculed them as gone. It did not come within the compass of their thoughts to carry the influence of learning and of liberty down to the vast multitude, that heaving sea of human beings, that rolled in brutal ignorance and slavery beneath them.

But what has Christianity done? It has done what such a religion as Christianity alone could do for the great mass of society. It has thrown light abroad from the throne to the cottage. It has taken the four corners of society, and lifted it up together. It has laid low the mountains, and raised up the valleys. It has exalted humanity from its lowest depths of slavery and ignorance, and is filling the earth

with knowledge and virtue. It has bid the oppressed go free. It has taught the haughty monarch that he is but a man, and that his meanest subject is a man. It has united all the hearts of its true followers in one glorious enterprise, for earth's emancipation and elevation.

Such an exhibition as is made nightly in our city, of lectures accessible to all, and daily in our palace school-houses, accessible to all children, was never witnessed since the world began, beyond the pale of Christianity.

8. The light of nature has never disclosed a way in which mortal sinful man may be reclaimed to holiness, and pardoned and restored to favor.

I am not unacquainted with the flippant assertion made by sceptical minds, that God can do by his omnipotence what he pleases, and reclaim and save, as well without, as with an atonement, — can make impossible possible, wrong right, folly wise, and contradictions consistent. And if men are machines, doubtless they can be governed by omnipotence as machines. But if they are free agents, and made for moral government, and for reward and punishment according to their character and deeds, we might as well assume the possibility of desert in the orbs of heaven, whirled by omnipotence in their circuits, as in minds governed irresistibly by the same omnipotence.

But, if mind can be governed, and character formed, and happiness secured, by divine omnipotence, without moral government, why has it not been done in the past history of the world? Has not God been almighty and good through all the past ages of time, while the whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain; and did not his benevolence prefer the happiness of men to misery? Why, then, being able, did he not make it sure? But, if God's omnipotence and benevolence have not done this, — if nations and

individuals have sinned, and suffered punishment, — what evidence is there that benevolence and omnipotence will do hereafter what hitherto they have never done?

But, if physical omnipotence is not, and moral government is, the energy by which God governs and blesses mind, how shall he sustain his violated laws, while all transgressions are forgiven? The light of nature affords no answer to this question. It is revelation alone that unites justice and mercy in the forgiveness of sin. The laws of nature may shine brightly around us, but they do not disclose a new and living way of reformation and pardon. Socrates reasoned on this subject, and could not perceive how God could maintain his moral government, and avert the penalties of transgression; and said to one of his friends, "We must wait till some one shall be sent down from heaven to give us information." I have only to add, that the light of nature has never availed to reach and rectify the heart of man, — has never extirpated idolatry, has not mitigated selfishness, nor pride, nor ambition, nor envy, nor hatred, nor lust, nor cruelty and blood; while the Christian religion has inspired the heart of man with things pure and lovely and of good report, and has filled the world with institutions for the culture of the intellect, and the culture of the heart, and the elevation and happiness of the whole human family.

These things are not mere speculations, but matters of fact. The Bible contains truths and motives, far above the light of nature. Its rewards and penalties are powerful; its institutions for the instruction of mankind are cheap and practical, and efficacious in the formation of character for the life that now is, and the immortal life to come. It has not, indeed, revolutionized the world, because the world has hated and rejected it, or neglected and disobeyed it, while the church of God has in

all things come short, and in many things offended. But where have constitutions and laws ever perfected societies that disobeyed them? But, undeniably, Christianity has wrought a mighty change in human character and condition. It has developed in society a benevolence, and humility, and meekness, and self-denial, and a vigor of intellect and enterprise, associated with purity in the family and the social state, such as no other influence has produced.

The following is the terrible description of the moral condition of society in the Roman empire in its highest state of science, the fine arts, civil liberty, and civilization.

Rom. 1: 28—32. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient: being filled with unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

The learned Tholuck, by cotemporaneous authorities, corroborates this account, especially the licentiousness, which, he says, "pervaded all classes of the Roman empire, high and low," and was comprehended in their worship, disclosed in their paintings and statuary, polluted their poetry, and oratory, and philosophy.

There is evidence that in all heathen nations, at one time or another, human sacrifices were offered. In Rome, at the gladiatorial shows, thousands of men, annually, were slaugh-

tered in conflict, for the amusement of the most refined men and ladies of the empire.

In India, the burning of widows on the funeral pile of their dead husbands has been an immemorial practice, — now slowly retreating before the humanizing influence of Christian laws and institutions.

There is, also, in heathen lands, generally, among the common people, a total destitution of moral principle, in respect to truth and honesty. Sir William Jones, of learned memory, for some time chief-justice in Bengal, declares that, in all his long experience, he had never known a native whose oath afforded him the least confidence of the truth of his testimony, and that it availed only as circumstantial evidence.

Universally, in heathen lands, the lower classes are ignorant and poor, and in sickness are uncared for and miserable.

No hospitals were reared till Christianity built them; there were no taxations of the community, for the support of the poor, and no voluntary associations for their relief, as in Christian lands, and no personal compassion; so that, from age to age, thousands and millions died, unheeded and unwept. A universal hard-hearted "don't care" for human woe has characterized our race in all time and in all countries, where the revelation of God and his Spirit have not awakened to compassion the sensibilities of our nature, and shed abroad benevolence in the hearts of men.

Buchanan, in his Researches in India, some forty years ago, says, — "We know that we are approaching Juggernaut, though we are fifty miles distant, by the bones of pilgrims which whiten the way." He says of the pilgrims, that, when provisions failed, and cold storms of rain occurred,

they gathered together in groups, without covering, and shivered and died, and often almost in winrows their dead bodies lined the road. At Juggernaut, he describes the whole region as offensive from the stench of unburned and putrefying bodies. The dogs, jackals and vultures, are horribly tame, from their habit of feeding on dead bodies. Sometimes they stand by the dying, waiting for their breath to depart, that they may devour them. He saw a woman dead, with her two little children beside her; and asked them where was their home: they said they had no home but where their mother was.

The obscenity of the worship of this idol in the action of the priests and the female inmates of the temple, and of the whole multitude of the people, he says, was such, that he shuddered, and instinctively felt shame and guilt, at being the spectator of such abominations.

From all this, and much more, it is evident that life in heathen lands is of no more estimation than the dust of the streets, or worthless animals; that the vilest passions reign, and the vilest deeds are done.

And in our own land, where emigration outruns Christian institutions, and infidels preöccupy the soil, there the convocation on the Sabbath is at the tavern, instead of the sanctuary, and hunting, and gambling, and horse-racing, and drunkenness, and licentiousness, and fighting, and blasphemies prevail, till the Bible and Christian institutions overtake them; and then these birds of ill omen are transformed, or screaming fly away, and all these abominable scenes are superseded by the worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, the establishment of Sabbath-schools and Christian libraries, and revivals of religion, and all the elements of pure and lovely and glorious Christian civilization.

Thousands of new settlements in our land which have been thus demoralized, have, in this manner, been civilized and purified by Christian institutions.

And if, in our cities, the statistics of poverty, and crime, and licentiousness, and loathsome disease, and unutterable woe, be examined, where will their victims be found,— under the auspices of the Bible and Christian institutions, or under the auspices of infidelity, and in the haunts of inebriation, and impurity, and cursing, and blasphemy, and murder?

I close this lecture with several remarks or inferences.

And, first, it is manifest, in the light of this discussion, that reason and the light of nature are not sufficient to meet the exigencies of the personal, social, and civil welfare of our race; and that a revelation, and divine institutions and aids, are indispensable to the temporal and eternal welfare of men.

It may be said, that the difference of condition between heathen and Christian lands is not occasioned by their different religions. — But no other causes are apparent for those opposite results; and the adaptation of Christianity and idolatry to produce these opposite moral results is as manifest as is the adaptation of natural causes to produce their effects.

I am aware that it is boastingly said and reiterated, that the Gospel and the church of God have had their day; and, though they may have mitigated the evils of barbarous society, are wholly incompetent to afford the illumination, and fulfil the vocations, of reason and philosophy.

It might be well to publish the known abortive efforts of the three French revolutions, and of the recent infidel associations in Europe and in our nation.

I will only say, in the language of Holy Writ, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a

green bay tree; yet he passed away, and lo! he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." It will be in time for infidels to boast, when the first infidel nation shall have rivalled our own in all that appertains to the highest personal, social, and civil welfare of man, for some twenty, fifty, or one hundred years.

Will it be contended that heathen lands are, and ever have been, as happy as Christian nations? If infidels really believe this, let them, in imagination, as the French did by legislation, abolish the being of God, and burn the Bible, and substitute the theatre for the Sabbath, and establish for the children of our nation foundling hospitals, and provide professional nurses, instead of the warm bosom and heart of wives and mothers, and proclaim nature as the only God, and the family a den of mere animals, and write over the gateway of all burying-grounds that death is an eternal sleep. Let them abolish our happy republic, and establish, in its stead, the Pope, and the autocrats of Russia and Austria. Let our wives and daughters be slaves and drudges, and burn on the funeral pile of their husbands; and their infants be strangled, or burnt, or given to alligators in our bayous and rivers. Let purity cease from all families, and impurity mingle in our worship of nature, and pollute our poetry and paintings and statuary, and pour like a mighty river through our literature from the press. And let our theatres be stained, annually, by the blood of thousands of gladiators, trained to fight and die for the amusement of the most refined gentlemen and ladies of our nation. Let the feudal system come back, in all its pleasures and beauties and glories, in which kings and nobles shall hold all the lands, and all beside be tenants at will, and most of them living on black bread, or potatoes,

with seldom a mouthful of meat, and always on the borders of starvation; in sickness and old age, to be sent to the poor-house, or abandoned to famine and neglect.

Let Juggernaut pilgrimages pave our roads, for twenty miles, with human bones, and create around them an atmosphere of stench, — where dogs and jackals and vultures are gentle, by moving among human beings, and feeding on human flesh; and where children have no home, but beside their dead fathers and mothers.

And let our newspapers, in their obituaries, chronicle the death of Mr. ——, and give notice, that the burning will be on —— day, at —— o'clock; that his beautiful young wife will burn with him; and, should her courage fail, and she attempt to escape, the dishonored family, and even her own son, will force her back into the flames!

LECTURE VII.

THE REPUBLICAN ELEMENTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

It is not uncommon for infidels to insist that the Old Testament is unfriendly to the liberty and equality of man, the joint product of despotism and priestcraft, and destined to pass away before the rising illuminations of the present day; that it was formed in a dark, superstitious, and barbarous age of the world, and is inadequate to the further advancement of society in the present enlightened age.

Such opinions can result only from profound unacquaintance with the contents, history, and practical influence, of this most authentic and venerable book; a book with which the more we become acquainted, the more we shall find that it has neither rival nor equal.

The most effectual way to remove this unhappy misconception and prejudice will be, to illustrate the design and efficacy of the Old Testament, in the production of such a state of liberty and equality as never, before or since, blessed the earth, save, perhaps, in our own nation. Instead of its being unfriendly to civil liberty, we possess in the Old Testament the first pattern that ever existed of national liberty and equality. It is not generally known, and would scarcely be believed, without inspection, that the Mosaic institute comprehends, in a high degree, all the elements and outlines of a federal national republican government, more resembling our own than any government *on earth* ever did, or now does.

It is but an epitome of this government that we can give in this lecture. But if we can render a concise account of its principles and relations intelligible at one view, it will be better than a more prolix description; and this is what we shall attempt to do.

It was the object of God, in the Mosaic institute, to fortify against the encroachments of idolatry, and stop the march of despotism, and lust, and blood, which, in its train, has ever darkened, and polluted, and cursed our world.

At the time of its establishment, the knowledge of God was fading from the world; the holy fire was going out from the hearts of men, and from his sacred altars; and all flesh was again corrupting its way before God. Nation after nation had turned their back upon him, and his commandments and worship. It was, that he might not be ejected from his own world, and all remembrance of his being and government be blotted out by his rebel subjects, that, in infinite compassion, he interposed to fortify the knowledge of his being, character, and worship, till the desire of nations, the Messiah, should come.

For this purpose, he called Abraham to be the father of a nation to whose care should be committed his Word and worship, and which, like a city compactly builded, should stand on its rocky base, and defy the assaults of an apostate world.

After the bondage of his descendants for four hundred years in Egypt, Moses was raised up to be their lawgiver and captain; to plant them in Canaan, and to establish institutions for the preservation of true religion, till Christ, the Messiah, should visit the world, and die for its redemption.

The laws of Moses, revealed to him by God, and recorded in the Bible, include the three following classes:

1. The moral law, which is obligatory upon all men, and

capable of universal and perpetual application. It does not depend upon positive and specific enactments, but arises from the permanent and unchanging relations of men to God.

2. The second class of these laws relates to the peculiar rites and forms of Jewish worship, which are typical, local, and temporary, — designed to meet the peculiar circumstances of that nation.

3. The third class are what may be denominated the constitution and laws of their civil government.

Now, because these laws, the ceremonial and moral and civil, are somewhat blended, the impression is made that the Old Testament is composed of a jumble of various laws, put together with reference to no intelligible design, and having no distinct result. Whereas, if we observe the *religion and morality* of the Old Testament, we shall find them the same as in the New. With respect to the *rites and ceremonies* of the Levitical code, they are but *shadows* of good things to come, and not the substance itself; and when they had answered their typical purpose, the shadows fled away, and the substance was established in their stead.

But it is of the *political laws* of the Old Testament that I shall now more particularly speak. To these I request a special attention, because it is in this view of the Mosaic institute that we shall see the republican tendencies of the Bible.

On these political institutions, we observe,—

1. That they are the enactments of Heaven: God delivered them to Moses, and Moses to the people. They are the laws which God condescended to bestow upon them, as a pattern of his wisdom, and an evidence of his benevolence; so that, if they are excellent, their excellence belongs to Him.

2. They preserve in the hands of the people as much

personal liberty as ever was or can be combined with a permanent and efficient national government. The smaller the number of minds to be governed, the freer the government may be; and the greater the number, the greater the difficulty of a free government that shall be a sound one. Now, the patriarchal system of families, and heads of families, was the first and simplest and purest form of government; and we find that all the features of this form of government were preserved by Heaven, and united with the national government. These families united, constituted tribes; and the tribes united for national purposes, constituted the federal republic.

3. We observe, again, that this new combination of patriarchates and tribes was adopted by the suffrages of the people. When Moses, on the Mount, had written all the words of the Lord, he came down, and repeated them to the people; and the people answered, with one voice, and said, "All the words which the Lord has said will we do." Thus, they accepted and adopted their constitution; it was chosen and adopted by the Jewish nation, as truly as the constitution of this country was adopted by the people. This adoption, by the Jewish nation, of the laws which Moses brought from God, was repeated at the death of Moses; and, by a statute, once in seven years was to be repeated ever after by the assembled nation. So that, from generation to generation, once in seven years, the tribes met in a great national convention, and solemnly ratified the constitution. They took what might be called the freeman's oath, to observe that constitution.

4. The administration of these laws was committed to men of their own choosing. The direction of Moses is, "Take ye wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you." Do you elect, and I will commission them for their several offices.

5. The doctrine of appeals from the lower to the higher courts is distinct and remarkable. It was similar to what takes place in our country. The appeal might travel up from the lowest to the highest courts in each tribe, and thence up to the seventy elders, — elected as assistants to Moses, and constituting the federal court, similar to the United States Supreme Court; — and, in cases of great importance, the appeal might be made to God himself, who gave judgment from the tabernacle, or temple.

6. We have called the civil constitution of the Old Testament a federal republic. It was so, in the highest sense. Each tribe, as to all purposes of government within itself, was perfectly independent, as each state is in our Union. They regulated all their own peculiar matters, and the national government did not intermeddle with them. So the tribes were each governed by their own laws; and those laws were as full of liberty as it is possible for laws to be, and still retain any force at all. I do not believe it possible for a people to be subject to a good conservative government, and be more free than the Israelites were, in their respective tribes. They possessed, in given cases, even the right of peace and war. Their land belonged to them, and they did not ask the nation whether they might drive off trespassers and invaders. While, at the same time, they were federal for the support of God's worship, and to guarantee to each other their religion and form of government, and for their common defence against enemies; just as our government guarantees to each state civil and religious liberty, and defends against external or internal violence.

7. But the most admirable trait in this republican system is the distribution of land, which made every adult male a land-holder; not a tenant, but the owner himself of the soil

on which he lived. This is the great spring of civil liberty, industry, and virtue. By this simple arrangement, the great body of the nation were elevated from the pastoral to the agricultural state, and were at once exempted from the two extremes most dangerous to liberty — an aristocracy of wealth, and a sordid, vicious poverty.

The predominant shape of their society in Egypt was pastoral; but it was the design of Heaven to secure a state of society eminently adapted to virtue and liberty; and, by this distribution of the soil to each individual and family, he made the whole nation agricultural. The single principle of universal ownership, in fee simple, of the soil, secured at once intense and universal patriotism, indomitable courage, untiring industry, and purity of morals: neither an hereditary nobility, nor a dependent peasantry, nor abject poverty, could exist. While the sun shone, or the streams flowed, and the hills remained, liberty and equality must exist among them.

But, not only were they free from entailed estates and an hereditary nobility, every family possessing its own land, and every male member of the community owning his share of the soil, but, more than this, if, by any means, in the inequalities of character, or the changes of life, the family was compelled to alienate a portion of its land, it could not be done for a period longer than fifty years. If alienated the first year after the jubilee, it could not be retained for more than the fifty years; if in the twenty-fifth, for more than twenty-five; and sometimes it might come back in eight or ten, or even one year.

Thus the whole land was kept in the line of family descent: no poverty or vice on the part of a man could deprive his family of the privilege of inheriting its portion of the soil, — thus attaching them to the community as

independent members, with all those inducements to freedom, and intelligence, and virtue, which appertain to the owners and cultivators of the soil.

If it should be said that the Jews were not preëminently distinguished for morality, I answer, that, compared with the nations around them, and considering the age, and the standard of purity then existing, their morality was preëminent; and in the better portions of their history it was, undoubtedly, higher and purer than any that anywhere preceded the Christian dispensation.

Besides the regular officers of the constitution, there were judges, who were military leaders, raised up for special emergencies, and inspired with courage and skill for temporary purposes, but whose influence was only that of prowess and wisdom. They answered, in some degree, to the dictators, who, in circumstances of great national peril, were placed in power by the Romans. Such were Gideon, Jephthah, and many others.

For the religious instruction and reproof of the people, a succession of prophets was raised up, and continued through an extended portion of their history. These persons, inspired by Heaven, were able to look into future times, and with the blessing and the curse upon their tongue, to warn, and rebuke, and exhort. They had no power but the sanctity of their lives, and their fearless patriotism, which carried reproof and admonition alike to the cottage and the palace. The character of Samuel is an illustration: those who are curious upon the subject may read how the character of Samuel shone out, beginning from the consecration of him to God by his mother, and ending with his death. It is one of the purest characters ever inscribed on the page of history.

In addition to this government by their chosen officers, the

people themselves held, in a general convocation, a general supervisory power; as the people of the United States, by a general convention, can now modify their constitution. So that we have, in the civil constitution of the Jews, primarily, the simple, elementary, free, and primitive government of the patriarchs, — the influence and ascendency of age and eminence at the heads of large family circles. These families were then grouped into tribes, and these again into a nation, which, when called together upon great occasions, took up the subjects that came before them, and decided, ordered, and modified, according to their pleasure.

So that the constitution was as free as it could be; and it is doubtful whether their constitution and government could have been as perfectly free, and yet efficient, if God had not been ultimately the supreme executive. You see, then, how far from the fact is the apprehension that the Jewish institute is adverse to liberty and equality; and how far it is from being the product of a dark superstition, tyrannical and despotic. There is more liberty in it than we could bear, with all the illumination of the present day.

At the expiration of four hundred years, at the request of the nation, the executive authority was placed in the hands of a king; the people, nevertheless, being reproved for their folly, and warned of the encroachment on personal and public liberty which would be the consequence. Before that, God himself had been the supreme executive. But even now the republican form of the government was not changed, and the king, though nominated by Heaven, was accepted by the people by acclamation, and his authority regulated and limited by a covenant, called the "Manner of the Kingdom," so that in the beginning he was little more than a commander-in-chief of the republic. The popular side of the government

was still so influential, in the time of David, that even he, in some cases, did not dare to punish: although he was able to command the military power of the population, he did not dare to execute righteous judgment on Joab; "These sons of Zeruiah," he said, "are too hard for me."

The provision for the literary and religious education of the nation is not less admirable than that for the perpetuity of their equality and agricultural habits. The perpetuity of liberty among a people so rude and free as the Israelites were on entering Canaan, demanded universal and immediate intellectual and moral culture. But how shall this be secured? They had come from a pastoral state in Egypt, and from a condition of bitter oppression, and had remained forty years in the wilderness, untaught, and were as unprepared for liberty as a people could be; and yet some system of education must go into operation under every disadvantage, even while they were driving the Canaanites out, and winning by the sword the lands which God had given them. How, then, was this to be secured? The power of the press was unknown, and transcription of school-books impossible. The exigency demanded an immediate supply of oral instruction, both for the ministrations at the altar, and for the schools: and divine wisdom met the exigency, by setting apart one whole tribe out of the twelve, to superintend the comprehensive interests of literature and religion. It was God's potent arm that did it. No other nation in the world, at that day, was as well educated as the children of Israel.

But it is objected, that the priesthood were paid at the extravagant rate of one-tenth of all the income of the nation, and that their support was too heavy a charge upon the nation. But just observe, that, as teaching was to be their profession, they were released from the care

of the soil, and their land divided among the tribes, with a reservation of one-tenth of the national income, for their support. This, considered as in part a compensation for the land they relinquished, as well as for all the professional labor performed by them as ministers, teachers, physicians, scribes, lawyers, and registers, was no more than a reasonable compensation for their capital and services. The Jewish priesthood was sustained, and probably honorably sustained; but they were no more than paid for the property they gave up, and the services they rendered for the support of education, and all the great religious interests of the country; forming, as they did, the great body of the learned men of the nation. This priesthood was not sequestered in cells and cloisters, nor separated by celibacy from domestic endearment, and rendered a standing army of unmarried ecclesiastics, unallied by the common affinities of blood and interest to the nation. The blood of the whole nation ran as freely through their veins as of any tribe: the heart of the Levite and the heart of the nation beat in unison. They were, through all the tribes, fathers of families, and so dispersed, and allied by intermarriages with the whole body of the nation, as to know the condition and feel every pulsation of the national heart.

In addition to this national polity, there are a few peculiarities which demand notice and admiration. One is the convocation of all the males in the nation at Jerusalem three times a year. Observe, that it was the object of God, to maintain his worship pure, to keep alive his knowledge and his doctrine, and to exclude the nation from any mingling in the idolatrous worship of the nations around them; and to carry this testimony down in a pure channel to the time of the Messiah.

In order to accomplish this, they assembled thrice a year, to form acquaintances with the purest and best men of the nation, to reciprocate information, form friendships, allay jealousies and local animosities, and afford opportunities for consultation, and forming concert of action; and for the diffusing a healthful public sentiment through the nation, bound by common ties of interest to their central city, Jerusalem; and how endeared to the hearts of the people by these fraternal meetings! How delightful to have lived and gone up with these tribes of God, in their great convocations, to maintain his worship, and to honor his name! What greetings, what fond recollections, what friendly sympathies, must have been formed — a centre, to spread their blessed influence to the remotest corners of the land! What interchanges of kindness,— what development of mind, and thought, and sympathy,— what national ardor,— what mutual incitements to virtue, greatness, patriotism, and piety,— must these great national meetings have produced! There they were, met for the worship of God, in their great and beautiful city, surrounded by all the endeared associations of childhood, and reminded of their past history, and high distinction as a people, by the striking and significant symbols there preserved of God's goodness and power to his chosen race. O, the wisdom and benevolence of the great God! How perfectly he understood the national frame, and how beautifully he adapted this simple, this touching institution, to shut out idolatry, and maintain his pure religion!

Another peculiarity was, the care to inculcate humanity and mercy. Of this, the law for the protection of birds and their young, and the prohibition of cruelty to animals, are instances. It may seem a little matter, but it is significant. He that is merciful in small things is humane in great. Ex-

emption from military exposure for one year after planting a vineyard, or building a house, or marrying a wife, is another instance of this care. What a considerate regard to the refined feelings of human nature lies in this peculiar law, — that when a man has set his heart on enjoying some peaceful work of national utility, some plan of provision for his children, some new and dear relation of life, he shall have peace; the rugged scenes of war shall not sweep over him — his life shall not be put in jeopardy. This surely was not an emanation from the age and times around them: it was the inculcation of Heaven.

The care to prevent retaliations and assassinations for unintentional destruction of life, by the appointment of cities of refuge, is another peculiarity of the Mosaic institutions. The reiterated inculcations of honesty in dealing, and of equity in the administration of justice, especially in respect of the poor, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless, form another example of wisdom and benevolence. The purity of the family also was guarded with peculiar care, and the rights and relative duties of parents and children. And the whole, in addition to the sanctions of eternity, was, as a civil code, sanctioned by all the blessings and all the curses of a remunerative and retributory providence. It comes out in tones of thunder, — it bursts forth in every page of the Levitical code; it shone as in letters of fire before the gaze of the children of Israel at every step, and stands out conspicuous through the Old Testament, wherever one reads. And had the nation been as pure as their laws required them to be, they would certainly have been a nation preëminently holy and happy.

Such is the epitome of the first and only civil government which God ever instituted and administered; and it is worthy of all admiration. That this form is republican, securing

religious and intellectual culture, and liberty and equality, in the highest possible degree consistent with united national government, cannot be denied by any one.

Far back in the infancy of nations, for the preservation of divine truth and worship, a republic, free as ever existed, and yet compact, intelligent, and efficient, was instituted, which was submitted to and adopted by the people; a nation of land-holders, owners of the soil by a tenure which excluded alike a voluptuous nobility, and a landless, reckless poverty, — the most terrific material of republics: — a republic whose blessed outlines survived all changes by kingly power, and vicissitudes of corruption and captivity; and, with its sacred charge — the oracles and worship of God — baffled idolatry, and brought salvation down to the times of the Messiah.

These republican institutions introduced by Moses contain strong internal evidence of the divine original of the Old Testament, independent of the testimony of miracles and prophecies.

This evidence is, that no existing knowledge in or around the nation, no examples, and no powers of the human mind, were sufficient to account for the existence of an institution, to whose excellence the world has scarcely reached with all the light of the present day. They are an effect for which no adequate human cause existed at that day, and indicate as clearly an origin above human intellect as miracles indicate a power above human power.

We are not now more republican than they were, though we have the gathered experience and light of all ages before us. With a constitution and laws brought from the best wisdom of the whole earth, and matured by the ripest experience of the human mind in a Christian and civilized and scientific age, we have no better system now, on earth, than belonged to

that nation of bond-men, rude shepherds from the slavery of Egypt, after wandering for forty years in a wilderness. Now, tell me where this system came from. Amid the total darkness of that semi-barbarous age, could a system so pure and bright, so permanently endeared to the choice of the people, have been struck out by human wisdom? We can no more account for it by the known laws of the human mind, than for the stopping of the sun by the voice of Joshua.

Delightful as are the sounds of liberty and equality, it is an exotic in our dark and wicked world. The pride and selfishness of man, ever the antagonist principles of equality, are tending constantly to extremes — rushing up to the extremes of power, and falling down to the debasement of ignorance, poverty, and crime. But that happy medium, where all are free and independent, none but God, in that distant age, knew how to secure; and here, amid the darkness, a light rises — a well-balanced republic, which, amid corruptions, temptations and vices, and captivities and arms, brought all its elementary treasures, with the oracles of God, down to the Gospel day.

My last remark is, that our own republic, in its constitution and laws, is of heavenly origin. It was not borrowed from Greece or Rome, but from the Bible. Where we borrowed a ray from Greece or Rome, stars and suns were borrowed from another source — the Bible. There is no position more susceptible of proof, than that, as the moon borrows from the sun her light, so our constitution borrows from the Bible its elements, proportions, and power. It was God, that gave these elementary principles to our forefathers, as the "pillar of fire by night, and the cloud by day," for their guidance. All the liberty the world ever knew is but a dim star to the noon-day sun which is poured on man by

these oracles of Heaven. It is truly testified by Hume, that the Puritans introduced the elementary principles of republican liberty into the English constitution; and when they came to form colonial constitutions and laws, we all know with what veneration and implicit confidence they copied the principles of the constitution and laws of Moses. These elementary principles have gone into the constitution of the Union, and of every one of the States; and we have hence more consistent liberty than ever existed in all the world, in all time, out of the Mosaic code.

And this is the secret of our success. We have reason to hope that our free government will endure. Let us so hope, so pray; and hold on to our faith in God, that he will not permit the institutions of liberty, which he has given to man, for freedom, to perish from the earth. I beseech you, do not oppose the crude objections of sceptics to the experience of the world, to the light of the Bible. It is the anchor of republics. Do not let your minds be carried away by specious sophistries from that wisdom which is based upon evidence, and adapted to the wants of human society. If the young mechanics of our cities will revere the Bible, will read the Bible, will study the Bible, and form their understandings and hearts by the Bible, I shall say, as Simeon did when he clasped and blessed the infant Saviour,—"Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." My dear friends, a better defence of civil and religious liberty than the consecrated hearts of the young mechanics of the land cannot be desired. Let them gather round and guard the ark of God, and it will be safe and victorious forever.

LECTURE VIII.

THE IDENTITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW.

This is a subject upon which a vast amount of misapprehension prevails. Many regard the Old Testament as containing a different religion from the New, "imperfect, earthly, obscure, and adapted only to the childhood of the human race, and chiefly useful in preparing the way for the Christian religion, as revealed in the Gospel; a record of the Hebrew, and not of the Christian faith; and calculated, as some have said, to neutralize our conceptions of God, to localize him as a tutelar divinity, instead of the omnipresent God of the universe; to give prominence to his power, and throw his moral perfections into relative obscurity; amplifying his wrath, while the sun of his mercy is hid by the dark storm of his vengeance; producing slavish fear and dark superstition, instead of humble confidence and filial love; a religion of forms, instead of the worship of the heart, and of actions, instead of principles and affections; leaving the future veiled in doubt and uncertainty, and imparting a new sorrow and a deeper darkness to the tomb; that its morality is low, and suited only to the circumstances of the Jews, and to be superseded by the purer, nobler morality of the Gospel."

The authors of these representations are not professed infidels; and yet, the first generation of English deists spoke more respectfully of the Old Testament, and with less exaggerated misrepresentations.

Indeed, if such conceptions of the Old Testament are just, it would be as difficult to see its adaptation to the "childhood" as to the manhood of the world; and as difficult to see its adaptation to prepare the way for the Christian religion, as to see how a book of fables should prepare the way for authentic history, or debasing error the way for a pure and correct belief. As well provide a book of directions for the hunting life, as a preparation for agriculture; or on the dressing of skins for clothing, as a preparation for the manufactories of civilized life.

It must be remembered that the Jewish polity comprehended the political, ecclesiastical, and moral laws of the nation. The first we have considered. The third — the moral laws of the Old Testament — will now claim our attention, as identical with the New.

We might infer this identity from the immutability of God, and the immutable relations of creatures to the Creator and to one another; and what we should anticipate, we find to be the fact. The Old Testament and the New give us the same account of the being, attributes, and character of God, as distinguished from the attributes, laws, and operations of matter.

He is not represented in the Old Testament as a local divinity, but as the God of the whole earth, — the God of the universe, inhabiting eternity and filling immensity, — a spirit, — a free agent, — wise, holy, just, merciful, and good.

We see, then, that God is not materialized in the Old Testament to the apprehension of any but those who do not understand the difference between personification and metaphor, and literal language. On the contrary, every power of language is employed to exalt our conceptions of

God above the attributes and operations of finite, local divinities, or the unthinking, involuntary energy of the material universe. The ascription to him of a human form and human passions, is metaphor which no intelligent common school-boy would misunderstand.

It was the great effort of the world, at that day, to establish the reign of pantheistic nature, or of idol gods. The object of God, in his word and institutions, was to rescue from oblivion, and send down through all time, the knowledge of his being, and person, and character, as an infinite, almighty, benevolent *Spirit;* and language so powerful, so conclusive and beautiful, was never before or since conceived or uttered. This was the very point of controversy between God and his whole alienated world; they were constantly tending downward toward debasing idolatry, and forgetful of his unity, spirituality, and universality. They would blot out his incorruptible image, for that of birds and beasts and creeping things; and it was against this tendency that God set himself. It was for this reason that he gave those manifestations of his character and declarations of his will, to counteract those dark and debasing views which it was the whole object of the idol world to establish, and render universal. Therefore he demands, "Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself, that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" And thus taught, and believing, David exclaims, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth and the sea, even there should thy hand lead me, and thy right hand uphold me."

In like manner do the moral attributes of God burst out in the Old Testament, shining like the sun in his strength, unrivalled even by any exhibition in the New. "The Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; who will, by no means, clear the guilty." "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" "As the heaven is high above the earth, so is his mercy to them that fear him." "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

Where, in beauty, or power, or glowing imagery of language, do you find anything equal to it? Where, in the New Testament, do you find the enraptured reiteration, "Praise ye the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever," calling upon nature to wake up, and mingle all its voices in the universal song? The church of the new dispensation, and the redeemed in heaven, borrow their most glowing language of poetry, and eloquence, and power, from the Old Testament. The Psalms of David have never been surpassed, and probably never will be equalled but by the enraptured worship of heaven.

The same account is given of the moral law in the Old Testament and the New, as demanding the whole heart for God, and enforcing impartial benevolence to men, friends and foes. All the relative duties of the ten commandments are recognized in the New Testament; while the law, in its precepts and sanctions, is made as enduring as the universe of mind to be governed by it. The morality, therefore, of the Old and the New Testament is the same: the same temperance, chastity, honesty, industry, justice, veracity, humanity, forgiveness, and charity to the needy, is alike inculcated in both.

It has been assumed that the Old Testament, and especially the Pentateuch, did not teach the immortality of the soul, and the retributions of the future state. It is admitted that in the political legislation of the Pentateuch the sanctions of the future state are not employed as distinctly as in other portions of the Old Testament, and in the New; and for the obvious reason, that, acting as the political lawgiver of the nation for temporal and temporary purposes, God enforced his political laws, like other lawgivers, by a special intensity of temporal sanctions. He made the air more healthful or pernicious, and the soil more fruitful or sterile, and their enemies more peaceful or aggressive, and prowess in battle more irresistible or impotent, as they obeyed or disobeyed his statutes.

But while he thus legislated as a political lawgiver, he did not waive his claim to the best affections of their hearts, or conceal the sanctions of eternity. All these had descended by tradition through the patriarchs, and were revealed anew by Moses, and mingled their moral influence with these civil institutions, as Christianity now lends its conservatory power to *our* political institutions. *The immortality of the soul, and the sanctions of the future state, are recognized in the Pentateuch, and were known in the church from the time of Abel to the time of Christ.*

The evidence is short and undeniable. The *faith* of the New Testament has for its object the future state — the rewards and the penal sufferings of eternity. It is "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." But the same faith is, in the epistle to the Hebrews, ascribed to Abel, Abraham, and the other patriarchs. "By faith, Abel was enabled to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. By faith, Noah, moved with fear, prepared an ark. By faith, Moses refused to be called the son

of Pharaoh's daughter, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect *unto the recompense of reward, and endured as seeing him who is invisible.* By faith, Abraham sought a *city which hath foundations, whose builder is God.* By faith, his descendants looked for *a better, even a heavenly country.* All these died in faith, not having *received the promises, but having seen them afar off.*" These promises had not respect to temporal good, but to the blessings of the future state. What shall we say to these things? Does the Bible ascribe no faith in futurity to Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Moses?

But there is further evidence. The Sadducees denied the immortality of the soul, and a future state. But the Saviour silenced them by an argument from the Pentateuch. He quoted the declaration, "I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob;" and his argument was, "God, in this declaration, recognizes an existing covenant between himself and these patriarchs; therefore, the covenantees, as really as the covenanter, exist. For God is not the God of the dead, of the non-existent, — but of the living; therefore, these patriarchs are alive with God in heaven." What is meant by heaven? Is it not the world of especial divine manifestation and perfect society, the residence of God, and of the angels, and of the righteous redeemed? And did the Jews possess no conception of such a world? The Pharisees exulted in their belief of it, as rendering them more orthodox than the Sadducees. Whence did they derive their belief? Not from the New Testament, for it was not yet written; but from the Old, and from Job, as old as Moses, and Daniel on the resurrection. Job says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and

though after my death worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God." And Daniel says, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt; and they that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." What is this but the faith and the doctrine of a future state and a resurrection? How can we doubt or question that such was the doctrine of the Old Testament?

The doctrines of the Old and New Testaments are the same. There is the same account given in both of God's mode of being,—three *persons* in one divine nature,—and of his everlasting ways. They give the same account of the fall of man and its consequences (in Genesis and Romans), of man's entire depravity, and the necessity of regeneration for every human heart. The Old Testament declares that men have all gone out of the way, they are altogether vile, and that there is none that doeth good,—no, not one: and the Apostle Paul quotes the language of the Old Testament in the New to prove, and says *it does prove*, Jew and Gentile to be all under sin.

Regeneration by the sovereign efficiency of God's Spirit is taught in both the Testaments. "A new heart will I give you; and I will take away the stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh." There is the same account in both of Christ the Messiah as God and man. He is called God in the Old and the New Testaments; and in both is also called a man, and in both are the attributes and works of man and God ascribed to him. There is no solution of this, reconcilable with the inspired verity of the Bible, but that he was God manifest in the flesh.

There is the same account of the death of Christ in the

53d chapter of Isaiah, and in his own account,—of giving his life for the sheep; and in Paul's,—that God set him forth a propitiation for sin, that he might justify him that believeth.

We find, in the Old Testament and in the New, the same conditions of pardon for sin: repentance and trusting in the Lord, in the Old; and repentance and faith in Christ, in the New: while both refer to the righteousness of Christ as the meritorious cause; only the Lord Jesus Christ is more distinctly revealed in the New than the Old. In the latter we find such language: "Surely, in the Lord have I righteousness." "He shall be called the Lord our righteousness." And in the former: "That I may be found in him, not having on mine own righteousness, but that which is by faith in Christ:" while in both Testaments the promises, threatenings, exhortations, and warnings, are the same.

The language of experimental piety in the Old Testament is unsurpassed by anything in the New. In copiousness, and variety, and sublimity, and beauty, and in power of metaphor and poetry of diction, it surpasses the New.

I may add, that the Lord Jesus Christ never professed to teach a new religion, but only to amplify and fulfil what had been revealed by Moses and the prophets. "Think not," he says, "that I came to destroy the law and the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." To the Jews, he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." The word *Scripture* was the name applied as familiarly to the Old Testament, by the early Christians, as the word *Bible* is now to both books. When the rich man in hell lifted up his eyes in torment, and besought Abraham to send some one to

warn his brethren on earth to escape the pains of hell, the reply was, "They have Moses and the prophets: if they hear not them, neither would they be persuaded, though one went to them from the dead." In other words, they have the means of salvation, if they choose to avail themselves of them.

The Gospel was preached to the antediluvians by Noah, and to the Jews in the wilderness; and men in all ages have been justified by faith. Faith could look forward to a Saviour to come, as well as it can look back to a Saviour who has come.

The Bereans were commended, because, when apostles preached, they tried their doctrines by the Old Testament, — the "Scriptures," which they "searched daily," to see whether these things were so, — "the holy Scriptures," able to make wise unto salvation: they searched the *Scriptures* to see whether the apostles preached right. This was their test of the apostles' doctrines, and the apostles commended them for so doing.

Again, it is said, that "the Jews tempted Christ:" that the prophets spake by the "Spirit of Christ which was in them." (1 Pet. 1:11.)

The Old Testament is supported by the same kind of external evidence which supports the New — the evidence of miracles and prophecy. It contains the same internal evidence; because it gives the same views exactly of God and man — of the moral laws of Jesus Christ and the Gospel, and its morality, and sanctions. If you believe what is revealed in the New Testament, you believe what is revealed in the Old; for "they are they," says Christ, "which testify of me."

But, besides this, Jesus Christ and the apostles refer con-

tinually, in their discourses and writings, to the Old Testament as an inspired volume, in illustration and confirmation of what they advance in the New. The quotations of this kind in the New Testament from the Old — and quotations *as from Scripture* — are very numerous, and from nearly all the books of the Old Testament. The following are the books quoted from, with about the number of quotations: — Genesis, 24; Exodus, 24; Leviticus, 13; Numbers, 1; Deuteronomy, 42; Joshua, 1; 2 Samuel, 1; 1 Kings, 2; Job, 1; Psalms, 75; Proverbs, 10; Isaiah, 81; Jeremiah, 11; Daniel, 3; Hosea, 6; Joel, 4; Amos, 3; Jonah, 4; Micah, 3; Nahum, 1; Habakkuk, 1; Haggai, 1; Zechariah, 6; Malachi, 8. They all make about three hundred and twenty-eight quotations, respect almost every book, and are always referred to as passages from the *Scriptures*. Thus, by Jesus Christ, and the inspired writers of the New Testament, is recognized the inspired authority of the Old.

From this identity of the Old and New Testament, I infer the undoubted inspiration of the Bible.

In the composition of the Old and New Testaments, between forty and fifty different writers have been concerned. They were not cotemporary with each other, but lived along through a period of three thousand years or more, occupying different stations in society, possessing different talents and characters, and placed in different circumstances; and yet they are as uniform in all the great outlines of the divine character, and in the laws of God, and morality, and religion, as if all had been dictated by one mind, and had been written in one year. But would so many human minds, in such circumstances, have made the Old and New Testaments so identical? There is no alternative but to believe that it was God's mind which produced the unity. The holy men of

God were inspired by him to reveal the same truths; and when we see what purity, and unity, and power, and identity of doctrine, is impressed upon the book, making it the same system, all the way down, though its parts were written at distant intervals through a period of three thousand years, we say, "This is the finger of God." The particles of matter might as well unite, of their own accord, in making a living human body, as forty uninspired minds, in different and distant ages, conspire to construct such a sublime, harmonious Bible. My friends, are you not satisfied with the evidence? For my own part, I am satisfied. In following this course of reasoning, we are not following "cunningly devised fables." It is not upon light or inconclusive reasoning, that we point to the Bible as the book of God, whose pure and enduring light has illumined the world, and will continue to shine purer and brighter till the coming of the day-spring from on high.

One word more, and that is, that the candid and diligent reading of this book will do more to satisfy an intelligent mind, than all the exhibitions of it, however able, which its best advocates can present. If the efforts of its advocates to prove its authenticity and value are not followed up by the study of the book itself, they will do but little to advance the heart, or enlighten the mind. These efforts I hope and expect that God will bless: but unless you take the book in hand, with a candid mind, and an humble desire to learn the truth for yourselves, and become fellow-workers with me in the efforts I have been making, the work will fall short. Do this, and the book will make you wise unto salvation. Do this, and you will perceive the truth of God beaming upon you. It will fill your minds and hearts with light and joy — satisfy your doubts — teach you wisdom and faith. Read this volume

with prayer to God that you may learn the truth, and, in the progress of your reading, all the mists of darkness will be dispelled by new and satisfying illuminations; and your hearts, which find no rest in the creature, will find rest in God.

LECTURE IX.

THE BIBLE A REVELATION FROM GOD TO MAN.

We have seen the impotency of reason and the light of nature to meet the exigencies of man, in time or eternity; and that the Bible, in its adaptations to our necessities, meets all our exigencies, personal, social, and civil, in a manner more rational and benignant than any other system that claims a parentage from God. So that, if God has given to man a revelation, the Bible has preëminently a claim to that distinction. And yet, strong as this presumptive evidence is, we admit that evidence more direct and unequivocal is desirable, and, if the Bible is a revelation from God, what we should strongly anticipate.

But how can the Bible be authenticated as a revelation from God? This is a very natural and proper question, and one which, we admit, we are bound to answer. For it is true that man cannot believe, or be obligated to believe, without evidence. Neither tradition, nor history, nor the church, nor the state, nor councils, nor the Pope, will avail. We must have somehow the testimony of God, to assure us of the inspiration of this Book. We must have the broad seal of Heaven, which none can counterfeit, set upon it, or we cannot give it credence. There must be actions performed, in attestation of its inspiration, of which none but God could be the author; and these actions must be so connected with the

testimony of those who claim to have been inspired, as to compromit the divine veracity, if their testimony is not true.

It is admitted, that He only who made the universe can sustain and govern it; there may have been many wonderful things done by *finite* beings of superhuman powers, but they can neither create, nor sustain, nor govern the world. He that created, and he that upholds and governs all things, is God.

We must admit also that the great laws of the material universe are so far uniform in their operations, as that, if any marked suspension takes place, — if, in the midst of their even and regular career, they are suddenly stopped, and a power greater than their own interposes to control them, — that power is God's. And, if the man in whose favor such interposition is granted claims to be commissioned to reveal the will of God to man, and, in support of his claim, adduces this divine interposition, which has been brought upon the laws of nature in connection with his testimony, then we must believe that God sanctions it as true: the interposition is the great seal of Heaven stamped upon his commission; it discloses the omnipotence of God, confirming the claim to inspiration.

A voice from heaven would not answer the purpose. If a man were to inform the world that he had heard a voice from heaven, how few would believe him! How much room would there be for scepticism and ridicule! "You heard a voice — did you — saying, 'I am God, and such is my will'? But how do you know it was the voice of God? Other invisible spirits, possibly, may speak; — how do you know but that it may have been they, that spoke? and how do we know that your testimony is true; that you heard a voice, and do not testify falsely?"

A bright angelic visitant, with sparkling eyes, and glittering

wings, and glowing tongue, would not suffice, without the proper signature of God to his mission. For, who can tell, whether he was truly an angel of light, or Satan transformed? Our faith would not rest on *God*, but on the *angel;* and whether he came from heaven or not, would rest on his *own* testimony, and not on the testimony of God.

Suppose a *man* should present himself to me, and say, "Sir, I perceive that you are in great darkness, and I am sent to teach you the way to God." I should reply, "I am much obliged to you, but what evidence have you to show that God has sent you? I am very much in the dark, and need teaching; but I want to know who my teacher is, and whence he derives his commission to teach me." He says, "I can perform a thousand wonderful things, which you cannot account for. I can perform things superhuman, and show you wonders which no mortal man can perform." "It may be so; and yet, these wonders may not surpass the powers of created agents; for both in heaven and hell there are mighty spirits: now, how am I to know that your aid is not from the father of lies to deceive me? Can you control the laws of nature? Can you call down or stop the showers of heaven? Can you send pestilence, and drive away disease? Can you raise the dead? Can you stop the sun? These are the seal of Heaven, unquestionably. Show me, then, this seal on your commission, and I will believe that you are sent of God, and authorized to teach his will. If, at your bidding, the sun stops in his course, and the rain for years is suspended, — if volcanoes blaze, and earthquakes rock the solid world, at your command, — I have the evidence from God that you are sent by him to instruct me. I ask no more; — I am sure that you, by your own power, could not do these things, and that none other but the power of God could do them, and that God, by

these interpositions, sustains your claim of being sent by him to instruct me."

But such are the evidences upon which we rely, to substantiate the Bible, as the word of God's revelation, for our guidance for time and eternity. And this evidence is contained in the miracles and prophecies connected with that book.

A *miracle* is such a control, or suspension, of the laws of nature, as none but God, who made the world, can accomplish; and in such relations to a revelation as give it the divine attestation.

Prophecy is a declaration of future events which no finite mind could foresee or conjecture, any more than it could work miracles.

These are evidence every way fitted to command attention, to make impression, and to produce conviction: so that, when a miracle is wrought, and it is witnessed by multitudes in open day, — or when a prophecy is made, and it is found that the records of future history in all respects fulfil it, — such evidences of revelation demand the credence of men. There is, it is true, a certain credulity in the human mind, which, to a certain extent, and for a time, is satisfied with the mere supernatural appearance of what they cannot explain. But, when a real miracle is wrought, under the circumstances which prove it really a miracle, according to the definition given, it always carries conviction to the human mind.

But, to these considerations, it is objected: —

1. That the laws of nature are perfect; that God made them for wise and benevolent ends, and adapted them to all the ends for which they are made; and that they do not need to be helped out by any innovations, and substitutions of God's power, to bring about results of his government; that we are

not to suppose that there could be occasion, in a perfect government of laws, for God's interposing to produce results which *would* not be reached by the comprehensive adaptation of his laws to those objects. An alleged necessity for miracles, it is said, implies defect in the original plan, which needs to be helped out by a constant resort to expedients.

ANSWER. The laws of nature *are* perfect for all the ends they were established to accomplish; and if, to bring out *those results*, constant miracles were needed, it would imply defect. God made the earth to produce wheat, &c.; and if, nevertheless, it would not produce wheat without a miracle — if the arteries would not carry the blood — if the lungs would not suffice for breathing, or the stomach for digestion — if the ox for the plough were not able to draw it, and the sun, which was made for light, were not able to shine, — and after all that God has done through all his works, an act of immediate omnipotence was indispensable to bring out the results intended,— the laws of nature would *then* be like the machine for perpetual motion, which, when finished and ornamented, had but one defect, which was, *that it would not go.*

But, in the laws of nature there is no such defect, and miracles are intended to supply no such deficiency; and the laws of nature do move on in their regular course, and do accomplish all they were designed to accomplish. The attributes of matter, so far as we know them, are uniform in their properties, developments, and uses: fire always burns, the sun always gives light; and all the elements which go to make up God's universe of matter *are* uniform, and perfectly efficient to all the great ends for which they were provided; so that miracles are not needed to mend them, nor do they help them out; — they but interpose to accomplish a purpose which their

regular movement was not made to accomplish, and could not accomplish; and which their occasional suspension only can reach, namely, to give attestation to a divine revelation, — a thing which the laws of nature were not intended to do, and cannot do. The daily rising of the sun does not do it, nor do the regular operations of nature do it; and it is only by the ordinary perfect uniformity of these laws, that extraordinary miraculous interposition of God is made manifest, showing that it is God who has done it.

The argument, therefore, that a miracle implies a defect in the constitution and laws of nature, is without foundation.

Objection 2. But it is objected, that it is not credible that even for *such* an end God should be continually disturbing the course of nature, and unsettling the foundations of experience and confidence.

No, it is not to be expected; and if miracles did this, the objection would have its weight. But all the miracles that God has wrought, from the beginning to the present day, have not had the least effect to bring uncertainty on the regular and thus far uniform movements of the laws of nature.

There is as much confidence in the regular rising and shining of the sun, as if it had not been stopped once at the bidding of Joshua, or veiled in preternatural darkness once at the crucifixion of our Saviour; and while miracles stand out conspicuous, the sun still shines, and all the great laws of nature hold on their course. There is the same confidence in the regular return of seed-time and harvest, and the necessity of human cultivation, as if three millions of people had not been fed by bread from heaven for forty years — as if Elijah had never been fed by the ravens — and as if the Lord Jesus Christ had never fed five thousand men with five loaves and a few

fishes. There is as much confidence in the necessity of using the skill of physicians, as if Christ and his apostles had never healed the sick with a touch, or raised the dead to life by a word. Miracles are not so frequent as to destroy at all the general uniformity which makes the suspension to stand out as an unquestioned act of direct omnipotence, and an infallible attestation of the divine inspiration of the message thus authenticated.

Objection 3. It is said that, however valid the evidence of a miracle may be to those who witness it, no human testimony can possibly authenticate the existence of a miracle to those who did not see it; for the laws of nature are uniform, and a miracle is contrary to all human experience. It is, of course, more probable that men should lie, than that the laws of nature should be suspended.

This is the celebrated argument of Hume, by which, no doubt, he supposed that he had thrown down the pillars of revelation. But, in the answer of Campbell, his pupil, he lived, it is said, to see and confess its fallacy, though he had not the magnanimity openly to retract it; — a mournful illustration of the aberration of acute and powerful minds, when under the influence of prejudice, and an aversion to the truth. Than Hume, few men have possessed a more powerful intellect, or greater acuteness; but in this instance he argued with marvellous shallowness, and inconclusiveness, and even ridiculousness; for his argument, when it is once touched by the wand of logic, is turned instantly into the most shallow and ridiculous sophistry. Let us touch it, and see what becomes of it. "A miracle," he says, "is contrary to the universal experience of mankind."

This is denied: for multitudes have recorded their testimony that they have witnessed miracles, — credible witnesses,

too; for they were furnished with every possible opportunity and motive to detect a fallacy, and they staked character, property, and life, and eternity, on a revelation authenticated by miracles, which they say they saw.

The assumption, then, that miracles are contrary to all human experience, is controverted by the most indubitable evidence on the pages of history; and we see, therefore, that miracles *are not contrary* to the universal experience of man. Besides, there has been scarce a nation on earth whose traditions do not recognize the existence of miracles. The claim, then, that miracles contradict the universal experience of man, is contradicted by an almost universal tradition to the contrary. We know not what has been in past ages, but by history and tradition; we do not even know that the sun has risen every twenty-four hours. We know nothing of the past but by testimony of man; and by this we are assured both of the general uniformity of the laws of nature, and their occasional suspension.

But, in the second place, we say, that were there no recorded experience of miracles, they are not *contrary* to the experience of mankind.

What is it, for a miracle to be contrary to our experience? It is to be present at the time and place at which a miraculous event is said to have happened, and to see and know that it did *not* happen. Suppose it should be reported all over the city, to-morrow, that during my lecture a man fell down dead; that the physicians examined the case, and pronounced him dead; and that I stepped forward, and took him by the hand, and, in the name of God, bid him rise; and that he was brought to life and rose. Such an alleged miracle would not be contrary to anybody's experience who was not present; but it would be contrary to *your* experience, were you here,

and saw that no such event happened. But it would be contrary to no man's experience on earth but yours; for none but yourselves were present to see and know that it was not so.

What is it, then, for miracles to be contrary to the experience of all men? It is that all men, of each generation, have been present at the time and place of every alleged miracle, and saw that it did not happen; a ubiquity of experience which belongs not to man, but to God.

The multitudes, then, who never saw a miracle, are no evidence against the credible testimony of those who declare that they did behold it, more than any negative testimony is evidence against positive testimony. In a crowd, a man knocks his neighbor down: I bring forward two men who saw the blow given; you bring forward, to contradict their testimony, one hundred men, who swear they did not see it. Both testimonies are true: the two men saw it; the hundred men did not see it, because they were not looking that way; but does their *not seeing* it prove that it did not happen? Do the slumbers of those who did not witness the shower of meteors some years since disprove the testimony of those who were awake and did see them? If this kind of logic were admitted, no fact could be proved, beyond the limits of the senses. So that the famous argument of Hume comes to this,— that no human testimony can prove to us the existence of any uncommon event, which we did not see! Not a very formidable argument, one would think, against the miracles of the Bible! All human knowledge, concerning facts not derived from our own vision, is gathered from facts made known by testimony; and miracles are facts as capable of proof as any other facts.

Objection 4. It is incredible, it is said, that God should

so regard the interests of a creature so insignificant as man, as to interpose by miracles on his behalf.

If man were an animal of mere instinct, it might be incredible that God should interpose on his behalf by miracles, to bestow what his common providence has bestowed on every living thing. But man is not an animal of instinct, but a social, intelligent, free, accountable, and immortal mind,— the noblest work of God,— comprehending, through an endless duration, an amount of enjoyment greater than all possible animal creations.

Why, then, should He not regard with superlative interest a race of such capacities in ruin; and, in his infinite benevolence, provide, if possible, a way to restore, at any sacrifice, multitudes which no man can number? In what other way could he, who rejoices over one wandering mind restored, more than over ninety and nine who had never wandered, gratify his own benevolence, and amplify the exceeding riches of his goodness, and brightness of his glory, and send through the universe such a tide of joy?

Objection 5. But, it is demanded, how do we know that the miracles of the Bible ever happened? The miracles of Moses are said to have taken place some four thousand years ago; and those of Christ and his apostles, nearly two thousand years ago. Suppose miracles to be good evidence of a revelation, how do we know, now, that they ever took place?

This is a proper inquiry, and ought to be met. It has nothing captious, or illogical, or ridiculous, in it. We ought to ask, and we ought to know, how miracles are proved. We did not see the parting of the Red Sea, nor hear the thunders of Sinai, nor taste the manna; yet we are called on to

believe that such things happened. Why should we be expected to believe them?

I answer: Because they are such events as could not have been believed to exist, had they not been realities; and yet, they have been believed to be realities by a nation, from its commencement until now, and incorporated into their history, traditions, songs, and worship, through all time. They are so notorious, that if they had existed, they could not but be known; and if they had not existed, the nation could not have been made to believe that they *did*. The plagues of Egypt took hold of the laws of nature at all points. The waters of the land were turned into blood — frogs covered and filled every dwelling — flies swarmed upon them, and vermin covered man and beast; and locusts, in clouds, darkened the air, and devoured the fields; boils tormented the people, and murrain slew the cattle of the land; while darkness visible covered it; and thunder, fire and hail, beat down the harvests, and slew man and beast in the open field; and, at length, in one night, all the first-born of Egypt died; while, all the time, in the land of Goshen, there was no annoyance, and all the laws of nature held on their propitious course.

All these were notorious and national events, and, if they did take place, were miracles. There was no necromancy or equivocation about them. The magicians themselves acknowledged the finger of God in them. Observe, also, that the institutions of this nation were based upon a belief of the reality of these miracles, as events which a nation of three millions witnessed. They were also officially certified to coming generations, by written institutional testimonials, confirmed by an unbroken tradition, and public memorials constantly occurring in their worship; and Moses appeals to them,

as his authority from God to legislate and govern the nation, and enforces his authority by an appeal to them.

Now, I admit, that miracles depending upon individual human testimony,— private miracles,— like those of Mahomet, or the modern Catholic miracles, amount to nothing, depending solely upon the credulity of the human mind for their support. But when the foundation of national institutions, that have come down from age to age, is based on miracles wrought before the whole nation, miracles notorious and unquestionable, and believed in through all ages, we have a miracle in such national delusion, if the historic events were not real.

The fact is not denied, that the children of Israel *believed* that their fathers were in bondage in Egypt — that they were delivered, by means of miraculous plagues, from the power of Pharaoh — that they crossed the Red Sea untouched by the waters, whose recoil overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host — that they passed through the desert, and were miraculously fed with manna, and with water from the rock — and that, after remaining there forty years, they were finally conducted to the land of promise. This has been the universal belief of the whole nation, from the first moment of its existence to the present hour. Look at it. If they did see these miracles, their existence is settled: for, if they did not take place, when did they begin to *believe* that they had seen them? Not at the time, if they did not happen; — if they did not take place, they all knew they did not: and at no time afterwards could they be made to believe that they had seen what they did not see.

When Moses told them of these events, if they really did *not* happen, why did they not tell him that it was all false?

How could that nation be made to believe them, when they all knew, from the beginning, that no such events had existed?

But the peculiar nature of their *institutions* is such that no man, in his senses, would have admitted them, unless founded on the authority of miracles.

Nature contained no stated laws for multiplying the product of land every sixth year, to supply the harvests which were intermitted by letting the land rest every seventh year; and the acquiescence of a nation in such an ordinance must have been founded upon the promise of God corroborated by miracle. There are many other peculiar institutions, which Moses never could have imposed upon the Jews, had they not believed them to be sanctioned by divine authority, upon the evidence of miracles. They were a turbulent people, and took nothing upon the mere authority of Moses; and even when his authority was sustained by miracles which they did not question, they often made insurrection against him.

They did, then, believe in the miraculous events recorded in their history; and there is no nation that has a written history so early, and traditions so entirely in accordance with it, and without any other and contrary history.

When, then, I demand, did this belief begin, if it did not begin with the nation and its institutions? Every day that you depart from the alleged time of these miracles, you augment the impossibility of their being believed; but let two or three centuries roll away, and you cannot make a nation believe such facts. A new and false history of a nation cannot be palmed upon it. There never has been such an instance. It would, itself, be a violation of the established laws of mind. Every nation has its history and its traditions, and you cannot find an instance of the real history of a nation being supplanted by a false one. If it could be done, all the histo-

ries in the world might be reversed. The Jewish nation, in all time, have believed that these miracles happened. Suppose they did not happen: suppose they never saw the plagues of Egypt, nor passed the Red Sea dry-shod, nor stood beneath the thunders of Sinai, nor lived on manna, nor wore the same garments forty years, &c. When did they begin to believe these facts? Not at the time they are alleged to have happened; and every day and month made it more impossible to make them believe that they had seen, from the beginning, what every soul knew they had not seen. Miraculous events, I repeat, are incorporated into their traditions, history, institutions, songs, and worship; and the further you go from the beginning, the more impossible the fraud becomes of innovating upon the tradition, history, and the senses of a nation. The Jewish history can no more be reversed than all the rivers of the world.

To illustrate this, take our own history. We have a history of the persecution and bondage of our forefathers in England, and that God prepared an escape for them, and bore them, as on eagles' wings, across the deep, where they endured hardships of mind and body, for the sake of enjoying freedom. We have a history of the French wars, and English wars, and Indian wars. We have a history of the Revolution,— of Washington, — and of the final achievement of our independence, and formation of our constitution. Suppose an attempt should be made to reverse all this, and to palm upon us another origin and history: that our ancestors dwelt about the Lake of the Woods; that they were oppressed by a mighty nation; that they were delivered by miracles; wandered for forty years on the northern shores of Lake Superior, Erie, and Ontario, and finally crossed the St. Lawrence, dry-shod, and set up a monarchy under which we all lived, till

the people, oppressed by their king, made an insurrection, and, by the help of one Washington, established a republic; — could anybody be made to believe such a tale, in the ever-fresh, unbroken recollection of our own history? Yet you could as easily palm this on us now, as a false history on the Jews at any time.

And the same argument sustains the Christian miracles. They were believed, from the beginning, by thousands who saw them, who could not have been deceived, and could not have received the institutions of Christianity at any subsequent time, if they had not seen the miracles.

Objection 6. But, it is said (and this is the last objection we shall notice), that all nations pretend to have their miracles, and that one is just as credible as the other.

This is not true, nor sustained by one atom of proof. It is a mere assertion, against known facts. No other nation or religion pretends to the existence of any *such miracles* as those upon which the Mosaic or Christian dispensation rests. There are nations who *claim* to have had miracles, but the proof of them comes down on single testimony. They were not wrought openly, in the presence of multitudes, — they rest upon the assertion of single individuals. There are no such miracles in kind or notoriety, at the origin of any other nation; which are wrought, by universal consent, into its history, philosophy, science, music, laws, institutions, customs, and worship; witnessed by the whole nation, and perpetuated by tradition and a written history, from its origin. No other nation claims to have such and so many miracles, as that we are forced to the alternative that they must have happened, or a greater miracle must be accounted for in their *being believed.*

It is said that the magicians of Egypt wrought miracles: but the tricks of these jugglers are not worthy of notice: they

were not as many or as expertly performed as those of Signor Blitz. The magicians acknowledged their inability to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, and confessed that what they had done were the dexterities of art. They could not stand before the miracles of Moses. Pharaoh, supposing Moses to be only a great magician, called upon his own magicians to enter the lists; and they produced a little blood and a few serpents, which might easily be done; but Moses turned all the rivers of the land into blood, and their serpents were swallowed by the serpent rod. But, when it came to them to produce lice, they declared they could not do it, they had no instruments for such work, and ceased from all further attempts, saying, "This is the finger of God."

So with the witch of Endor. She is said to have raised Samuel. But she was an impostor, and intended to deceive Saul. And she was as much terrified as Saul was, when God brought up Samuel,— and cried out in astonishment. It was God that raised Samuel up, to utter his own predictions. But, as for the woman, she was the last who thought to see him, and was exceedingly terrified at his appearance.

So in the case of Job. The miracles which tried Job, God wrought, and not Satan. This is one of the strongest cases that has been brought. The question was, whether Job was a man of integrity. Satan questioned it, and God permitted the trial to be made. The argument of Satan was, that Job was selfish — that he found his interest in religion, and therefore he was religious. But did Satan work the miracles? No: Job testified, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away." And, after the trial was completed of this holy man, God said to Satan, "He holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without a cause."

Other miracles are said to have been wrought in modern times, by Mahomet, and the Catholic church. But these are private miracles, and are always sustained by *ex parte* testimony. Mahomet *said* that he had wrought miracles, and that they had been wrought for him, — that he went to the moon, and to the heaven of the blessed, &c.; but nobody saw these things. They were not apparent to the senses of the multitude, like the miracles of the Bible: and there are no other such miracles in history, and none on which the civil and religious institutions of nations are founded.

I omitted, in my past lectures, to say, that, in discussing these subjects, the door was open for inquiry. If there be any question which any one present would like to propose, it will be attended to. And if there be any question sent to me in writing for the next meeting, it shall be attended to. I have urged this subject on your attention, on the supposition that it is a proper subject for discussion. God forbid that discussion on so important a subject should be precluded, or that any should be called on to fall in with any views of religion without inquiry. A full and free inquiry should be made, if made at all, and in a spirit of truth, and candor, and seriousness; for this is a subject in regard to which a great responsibility rests upon us. It becomes us to approach these interesting inquiries in a spirit of humility. First, because they are the highest that the mind can reason upon; and, secondly, because they deeply affect our most vital interests. The anatomist, when dissecting for the information of his pupils, cuts boldly, because he knows that, if he makes a mistake, there is no harm done; the body is dead. But if he be operating on a living subject, he must take care where he draws his knife, lest he touch a vital part.

In reasoning upon the Bible, we are not compelled to believe

without evidence. There are many to whom, for want of information, that evidence is not clear. They ought not to be wantonly accused of bad motives. If a man doubts, he is not to be sneered at and brow-beaten, and cast out of society, because he does not believe. There may be men so rude and reckless in their opposition to religion as to incur the just displeasure of all thinking men. But it is not with such men that we ought to class him who honestly doubts, but is willing to be candid, willing to weigh the evidence, willing to be convinced, and to avow his conviction, if he should find the evidence on the side of Christianity. To such I speak, if such there be in this assembly. Do not be afraid, or unwilling, that the Bible should be true. The judge who sits upon the property of men is bound to be honest; he is bound to keep both ears open, that he may hear both sides: and a judge that should keep but one ear open, and refuse to hear the other side, would be impeached. But it is just as bad to sit in judgment upon our own interest, and refuse to hear both sides. All that is needed is a candid discussion; and may God help the right!

LECTURE X.

THE PROOF OF THE REALITY OF MIRACLES.

THE subject of the present lecture will be found in the following note, which I received after the preceding invitation :

Cincinnati, Feb. 20, 1838.

REV. DR. BEECHER :

Dear Sir : — You have several times expressed a readiness to answer any objection that may be made against the Christian religion, or against anything that you may urge in its defence. The object of this note is not to make objections, but to ask information; and I hope you will be as ready to give the latter, as to answer the former.

In your last lecture you assumed the position that miracles were satisfactory credentials of a message from Heaven. This is true ; and if the miraculous accounts in the New Testament are true, Jesus Christ is the son of God : but what evidence have we that the New Testament is an authentic history of the life of Christ ? If you can show that any one of the Gospels was written *shortly* after the events related in it are said to have transpired, that it was received as a true history by the Christians of the *city of Jerusalem*, and that it was probably open to the inspection of those interested to suppress the religion in its infancy, the proof, to my mind, of the truth of Christianity, will be conclusive.

It is related, in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that, on the day of Pentecost, the power of speaking various languages, with which they were before unacquainted, was conferred upon the twelve apostles. If it be true that such power was conferred, the fact, I think, must be susceptible of proof.

If you can show, then, from ancient history, ecclesiastical or civil, that *any* of the twelve apostles (except Paul) planted the Christian religion, soon after the death of its founder, among people speaking languages not

spoken in Judea, I will have no difficulty in receiving as true all the miraculous accounts in the New Testament. I except Paul, because all that is said of him in the "Acts," as well as his recorded speeches and his writings which have come down to us, shows him to have been a man of no ordinary talents, and of liberal education; and he might POSSIBLY have acquired, in the ordinary way, before he became a Christian minister, a knowledge of the language of the people among whom he preached. But this could hardly have been the case with Galilean fishermen.

If, therefore, you can show that Andrew, or Alpheus, or Thomas, or any of the original twelve, who are acknowledged by all to have been illiterate men, did so preach among people of a strange tongue, and establish churches among them, you will satisfy me.

Yours, with respect and esteem,

A JOURNEYMAN MECHANIC.

I HAVE nothing to object to this request, and statement of the case. It is very lucid, very candid, and very just; and it gives me great pleasure to answer doubts proposed in this manner, and brought to this test; and the more so, that I feel a happy persuasion that the person who penned this note, and others who have doubts in the same way, will be satisfied. But the event must decide whether it will be so or not.

This note calls our attention to two points:

I. Were the Gospels written shortly after the events they record, so that the living generation might know the truth or falsehood of the alleged facts?

II. Was the gift of tongues, said to have been communicated on the day of Pentecost, employed by the Galilean fishermen in preaching the Gospel, and planting churches among other nations of other tongues?

These are the two questions for our consideration. And, before answering them directly, I will premise two things.

1. That Jesus Christ was the founder of the Christian religion. This few have denied, until, recently, it has been

discovered that to admit the fact is to prove the inspiration of the Gospel. Since this, some feeble attempts have been made to mystify the subject, and create doubt as to the existence of Christ. The whole opposition to Christianity, for ages, never denied the fact; and there have been no denials of it, that I know of, till within the last two centuries, and chiefly within the last fifty years. But, that a fictitious author of a revolution, which pervaded Judea, and extended throughout the Roman empire, and overthrew the religious opinions of the civilized world, should be regarded universally, for ages, as the real author, would of itself be the most stupendous of all miracles. Such a revolution never yet was ascribed to a false origin — a fictitious hero. It would be to belie the senses of a whole nation, of the whole Roman empire, and overturn all the laws of human belief, and annihilate the credibility of all testimony. It is past all controversy, that Christianity began to exist at the time it claims. It certainly did exist, and did supplant Judaism and Paganism; and, in less than three hundred years, predominated in the Roman empire, and also in a great part of the uncivilized world.

Certainly it had a beginning; and to suppose that the reputed authors of its establishment did not preach the Gospel and perform the miracles related by them, is to suppose the senses of men, and the laws of evidence, and the motives of action, to have changed, at that time, in the whole civilized world, in a period of its highest intellectual power, and scientific and literary attainments.

We may as well assume that all the rivers in creation have no source, and have flowed for ages from nothing, as that a revolution in religion, Jewish and Pagan, which has changed the face of the world and modified its history for two thousand years, flowed, not from its reputed, but some unknown

author. As well may we deny the existence of Cyrus, or Alexander, or Alfred, or Cromwell, or Luther, or Washington, as of Jesus Christ.

2. Christian testimony is credible testimony; that is, the testimony of the founders of Christianity is the testimony of credible witnesses.

The marvellous events whose existence they narrate are facts cognizable by the senses,—facts of great notoriety,—unusual, and separated from all other facts within human experience; they are of superlative interest, importance, and notoriety, above any ordinary facts of history. If they did take place as narrated in the Gospels, the testimony of the apostles and primitive Christians is as good as, and, I think, better than, that which authenticates any other credible history. And yet it seems to be assumed by infidels that the founders of Christianity, being interested witnesses, are not credible witnesses. But their testimony is as valid as that which sustains any history. It is a universal principle of common sense and law, that any competent witness is to be presumed to testify the truth, until something is brought to impair the credibility of his testimony. The apostles and primitive Christians were competent to judge of facts, and to record them; and were at least as honest as men of other nations and religions, and were no more likely to testify unfairly, in their own favor, than the writers of other nations and religions: and as such, we shall quote their testimony; and, though it does not need proof, yet we shall prove our proof, if we do not misunderstand the force of evidence.

The history of the apostles contains no internal evidence against its truth. It was received as true, and has been, from the beginning. No history of facts, differing materially from the evangelical history, has ever been put forth, by friend or

foe. Its truth is therefore to be assumed, until evidence is brought to impeach it.

In the providence of God, two facts are made to stand out most significantly in connection with the origin of the Christian religion.

The Hebrew language of the Old Testament, in which the great body of the predictions respecting the coming of Christ are contained, ceased to be used as the common language of the Jews during the Babylonish captivity, nearly six hundred years before Christ. After the Babylonish captivity, the Jews spoke a different dialect, — not the pure Hebrew, but Chaldaic and Hebrew mingled, — and they never spoke the pure Hebrew again. This it is that marks the age in which the prophecies were written. Then it was that God stereotyped his prophecies, in a language that ceased, from that time, to be a living, spoken language; that it might never be said that the prophecies were forged, to suit the history of events, after they occurred.

Another providence in the same manner marked the era of the written and spoken language of the New Testament. About the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and before the end of the first century, the language of the Jews ceased to be spoken and written in Judea, in consequence of their dispersion, and another language became the spoken and written language of the country. The Gospels were written in Hebraistic Greek, only used by the Jews of the first century. The Gospels, therefore, if forged, must have been forged during the lifetime of the apostles, and the whole generation of cotemporaries of the alleged facts. But it is impossible that, at that time, when the whole matter was within the knowledge of all, a false history, so striking as this, should have been palmed on the nation and the world.

It was during the lifetime of the apostles that this language ceased to be a spoken and written language; and within that time no forgery could possibly have been practised with success.

It is, then,—to recapitulate,—fair to assume that the history of the apostles is as good evidence of *facts*, as the history of Mahomet, or the history of Greece and Rome, or of the discovery and colonization of America. No instance has ever been found of a false history of a nation or a religion being received as true from a period contemporaneous with the events it narrates, or immediately subsequent.

But is there any evidence that the Gospels were written shortly after the events they commemorate?

Answer: The evidence is indubitable, from sources already indicated.

(1.) The language in which the Gospels were written ceased to be a living language during the first century of the Christian era,—probably from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. They were written in Hebraistic Greek, spoken only by the Jews of the first century,—and must have been forged, if forged at all, during that time; but during that time it would be impossible for any one to palm upon the church a totally false history, and for the whole church, cotemporary with the apostles, to be made to forget their true history, so fresh before them, and receive a false one. As readily might they have been made to believe the sun had always arisen in the west, and that all the rivers had run up hill, or that the harvest had ripened in winter. It would have been just as easy to deceive their senses in the one instance as in the other. You suppose a miracle, to get rid of a miracle. To make the subject more plain,—What would have been the fate of a man who should have published a spurious history of the American

Revolution, in the lifetime of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, or of the generation which succeeded them? Let any one try the experiment. He may scatter his books into every city. No one will believe him: Congress knows, the whole nation know, the facts. Nobody could have published a false history of those times, and have been believed. It is just so with the Christian histories. Could anybody, in the lifetime of the apostles, and of the generation cotemporaneous with or succeeding them, have induced anybody to believe a history of their age, in which there was not only no truth, but a collection of the wildest fictions? Most assuredly not: and, at any time since, it would have been extremely difficult to palm such a history upon men.

It is a signal fact, in respect to the Old Testament, that it was embalmed in a language dead anterior to the fulfilment of its most important predictions,—and that the same should be true of the New Testament. But,

(2.) We possess memorials of the Gospel history in extracts from the early writers, which go back to the churches of apostolic origin. These extracts show the Christian writings to have been in existence, by quotations from them. The quotations appear first about the time of the apostles — certainly before all of them were dead; and, from being few in number at first, go down increasing, like a river by auxiliary streams, till they are multiplied in commentaries, and pervade all treatises and ecclesiastical writings.

In the epistle of Barnabas, written shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, the following remarkable quotation from Matthew occurs: "Let us beware lest it come upon us *as it is written*, 'There are many called, but few chosen.'" Again, the quotations, "Give unto every one that asketh," "He came, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repent-

ance." The passage, "*There are many called, but few chosen*," is contained in Matthew, and in no other book in the world. And the manner in which it is quoted, namely, "it is written," is exactly the manner in which the Jews quoted from the Old Testament; and Barnabas, being a Jew, applied the same phraseology to a book of the New Testament, thereby quoting and recognizing it as an inspired book, and entitled to the same confidence which a Jew gave to the Old Testament.

Clement, who had seen and conversed with the apostles, wrote an epistle, in which the following passage occurs: "Especially remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, which he spake, teaching gentleness and long-suffering; for thus he said: 'Be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven unto you; as you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you give, so shall it be given unto you; as ye judge, so shall ye be judged; as ye show kindness, so shall kindness be shown unto you; with what measure ye mete, the same shall it be measured to you.' By this command, and by these rules, let us establish ourselves, that we may always walk obediently to his holy words."

Observe, that these quotations are quoted evidently from *memory*, but contain the sense exactly, and the words almost *verbatim*. It is the way in which all the fathers were accustomed to quote.

He says again: "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus: for he said, 'Woe to that man by whom offences come; it were better for him that he had not been born, than that he should offend one of my elect; it were better for him that a mill-stone were tied about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the sea, than that he should offend one of my little ones.' "

In the "Shepherd" of Hermas, ascribed to Hermas the cotemporary of Paul, and certainly of high antiquity, are such expressions as these: "He that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery;" and, speaking of Christ, he says of him, "Having received all power from his Father." The fragment from which these quotations are extracted is a very short one.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, where men were first called "Christians," about thirty-seven years after Christ, and who, of course, must have seen and conversed with most of the apostles, wrote several epistles, containing evident allusions to the Gospels. He says, "Christ was baptized of John, *that all righteousness might be fulfilled by him.*" "*Be ye wise as serpents* in all things, and *harmless as a dove.*" "The Spirit knows *whence it comes and whither it goes.*"

Polycarp had been taught by the apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ. In an epistle, he has the following: "If, therefore, we pray the Lord that *he will forgive us, we ought also to forgive.*" "Beseeching the all-seeing God *not to lead us into temptation.*" "Remembering what the Lord said, teaching: 'Judge not, that ye be not judged; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.'" From the Acts of the Apostles, "Whom God hath raised, having loosed the pains of death."

Papias, a hearer of John, and cotemporary with Polycarp, who had heard the apostles, in a work quoted by Eusebius, ascribes to Matthew and Mark the Gospels which bear their names. About twenty years after the preceding writers, Justin Martyr wrote. His allusions to Christ would almost

form a history of his life, and all but two are contained in our present Gospels.

The following quotations are allusions to particular passages: "Depart from me into outer darkness, which the Father hath prepared for the devil and his angels." "I give unto you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon venomous beasts, and upon all the power of the enemy." "And, before he was crucified, he said, 'The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the Scribes and Pharisees, and be crucified and rise again the next day.'" He says of Matthew and John, "As they have taught, who have written the history of all things concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ, and we believe them." He calls them "memoirs composed by the apostles and their companions."

Hegesippus, a Christian writer thirty years later, relates that, travelling from Palestine to Rome, he visited many bishops; and that, "in every succession and in every city, the same doctrine is taught which the law and the prophets, and the Lord, teach." This shows that the Gospels, one or more, were in the hands of the churches as of equal authority with the law and the prophets. He employs the usual phrase, "the law and the prophets," for the Old Testament, and the "teaching of the Lord," for the New.

In a letter from Lyons, whose Bishop, Pothinus, was 90 years old (A. D. 170), and whose early life must have reached back to the apostles or their immediate cotemporaries, is this passage: "Thus was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Lord; that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Irenæus succeeded to Pothinus as Bishop of Lyons — a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John. He was little more than a century from the publication of the

Gospels, and was instructed by one who had conversed with the apostles. His testimony is as follows:

"We have not received the knowledge of the way of our salvation by any others than those by whom the Gospel has been brought to us. Which Gospel they first preached, and afterward, by the will of God, committed to writing, that it might be, for time to come, the pillar and ground of our faith. For after that our Lord rose from the dead, and they (the apostles) were endowed from above with the power of the Holy Ghost coming down upon them, they received a perfect knowledge of all things. They then went forth to all the ends of the earth, declaring to men the blessings of heavenly peace, having all of them, and every one, alike the Gospel of God. Matthew, then, among the Jews, wrote a Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel at Rome, and founding a church there: and, after their exit, Mark, also, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writing the things that had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the Gospel preached by him (Paul). Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord who leaned upon his breast, likewise published a Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia."

Clement of Alexandria, who lived sixteen years after Irenæus, alludes to the Gospels. But I omit to quote more extracts, having presented you with sufficient for the argument.

From this time till the era of commentaries, the stream of quotations swells more full, as time and transcription multiplied copies. But they are all quoted from the Evangelists, or the Acts of the Apostles; and quoted as inspired writings. When the books were scarce, the quotations were few. But, as they multiplied, the stream flows on, widening and deepening, in the rich instructions of God's word, in

other writings than those of the evangelists, till it pervades the Christian literature of the whole civilized world.

Nothing but the truth of the facts narrated in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles can account for the fact, that neither Jews nor Pagans should ever have contradicted those facts, and that the mouth of the whole world, for eighteen centuries, should have been closed as to any denial of their truth. The Jews admitted the miracles, but ascribed them to the agency of the devil.

To illustrate the force of the argument derived from the fact that the books were quoted from the earliest times as inspired and true, suppose that, fifty years hence, some monarchist should contend that the Declaration of Independence was a *forgery;* but, on examining fourth-of-July orations, and sermons and speeches of the day and afterwards, we found extracts from it, back to the very day of its publication, — would we say that no such declaration had been published? Were the Congress imposed upon, and all that generation, and all that followed, down to us, in supposing the document genuine, and quoting it as such?

Suppose the constitution of the United States should be declared a forgery; but, in the records of Congress and courts, we found extracts from it, up to the era of its adoption, and references to it in speeches, and in all the histories that have been since written,— could its legitimate adoption be questioned, in the face of such evidence?

In respect to the testimony of the founders of Christianity, there is no cotemporaneous contradiction, nor scrap of history different from what they narrate. This would be *impossible*, if the history of the evangelists, and the Acts and the Epistles, were not notoriously true; for no cause ever encountered a more furious and steadfast opposition. Instead of conflicting

histories, all the scraps and incidental notices of Christianity, by Jewish or heathen writers, are coincident with and corroborative of the evangelical history.

Josephus, a Jewish writer about sixty years after Christ, recognizes the existence and outlines of the history of John the Baptist, and his tragical end by the order of Herod; and the following account of Christ is in every copy of his history extant: "At that time lived Jesus, a wise man, if he may be called a man, for he performed many wonderful works; he was a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure; he drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. This was the Christ: and when Pilate, at the instigation of the chief men among us, had condemned him to the cross, they who before had conceived an affection for him did not cease to adhere to him; for, on the third day, he appeared to them alive again: the divine prophets having foretold these, and many wonderful things concerning him: and the sect of the Christians, so called from him, subsists to this time."

Tacitus, seventy years after Christ, describes the sufferings inflicted on *Christians* at Rome. "The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator, Pontius Pilate." This is the testimony of Tacitus, an established Roman historian.

Such is an outline of the nature of the historical evidence of Christianity, though but a very small part has been quoted of what is accessible. It is impossible to give the whole in the compass of a lecture.

The following is the outline of what Paley, in his "Evidences of Christianity," has given. If any one of you is desirous to read it at large, he may refer to the book, and read it all with great profit. The outline of his argument is contained in the following propositions, found in Chapter IX., under the head-

ing — "There is satisfactory evidence that many persons professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles passed their lives in labors, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief in the truth of these accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct."

"The method," he says, "which I propose to myself is, first, to place before the reader, in one view, the propositions which comprise the several heads of our testimony, and afterwards to repeat the same propositions in so many distinct sections, with the necessary authorities subjoined to each. The following, then, are the allegations upon the subject, which are capable of being established by proof:

"1. That the historical books of the New Testament, meaning thereby the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, are quoted, or alluded to, by a series of Christian writers, beginning with those who were cotemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed them, and proceeding, in close and regular succession, from their time to the present.

"2. That when they are quoted or alluded to, they are quoted or alluded to with peculiar respect, as books *sui generis*, as possessing an authority which belonged to no other books, and as conclusive in all questions and controversies among Christians.

"3. That they were, in very early times, collected into a distinct volume.

"4. That they were distinguished by appropriate names and titles of respect.

"5. That they were publicly read and expounded in the religious assemblies of the early Christians.

"6. That commentaries were written upon them, harmo-

nies formed out of them, different copies carefully collated, and versions of them made into different languages.

"7. That they were received by Christians of different sects, by many heretics as well as catholics, and usually appealed to by both sides in the controversies which arose in those days.

"8. That the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the thirteen Epistles of St. Paul, the first Epistle of John, and the first of Peter, were received, without doubt, by those who doubted concerning the other books which are included in our present canon.

"9. That the Gospels were attacked by the early adversaries of Christianity, as books containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded.

"10. That formal catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published; in all which our present sacred histories were included.

"11. That these propositions cannot be affirmed of any other books, claiming to be books of Scripture; by which I mean those books which are commonly called Apocryphal books of the New Testament."

Of all these propositions he gives you the proofs — ample, as I judge, to sustain them. Any person who feels an interest to pursue this subject further, will find these propositions sustained by quotations and facts in "Paley's Evidences of Christianity."

II. It now only remains to inquire, Can it be shown, from ancient history, ecclesiastical or civil, that any of the twelve apostles, besides Paul, were employed in planting the Christian religion, soon after the death of its founder, among a people speaking languages not spoken in the land of Judea?

It is no more candid than just to admit the validity of the

testimony of the founders of Christianity, and of early Christian records. We have shown that they are stereotyped immutably in a language which ceased to be spoken during the first century; which proves that the histories must have been written in the days of the apostles, or of their cotemporaries, and are only to be confuted infallibly by universal consciousness, if they were not all true; for the transactions claimed were not done in a corner, but pervaded Judea, and shook the Roman empire. We have produced extracts, also, from these sacred books, from the time of the apostles, augmenting like a flood, till the Roman empire was covered with the knowledge of the Scriptures, as the waters cover the sea. We, therefore, quote the documents as unimpeached and unquestioned authority. WE HAVE PROVED OUR PROOFS; and it belongs to those who reject their testimony to disprove their truth, by other evidence than assertions or doubts.

1. We find Peter, a Galilean fisherman, preaching to the Gentiles in Cesarea — to Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian band. And, when called to account for preaching to the *Gentiles*, by the church at Jerusalem, he stated that he had seen a vision in his sleep, and heard the voice of God speaking to him, and commanding him to introduce to the Gentiles the knowledge of Life, and the immunities of the Christian church, and he asks, "What was I that I should withstand God?" Now, the inference is that the multitudes of these Gentiles whom he converted to Christianity were men of other languages from his own, though the evidence is not so unequivocal as other passages I shall introduce.

Two of the chief of the brethren in the church at Jerusalem, Judas and Silas, are sent from Jerusalem to the church at Antioch (a Gentile city), composed of Gentile converts, speaking the Greek and Syriac language, to adjust a difficulty

about circumcision; and we find, about the same time, that Peter is at Antioch, publicly discussing with Paul the same subject. What was Peter there for? He was not acquainted with the language of Antioch. Yet he was listened to by many who were unacquainted with the language of Judea. Again, it is probable that he gathered a church; *certainly* he preached to the church at Babylon. In his first epistle, he says, "The church which is at Babylon saluteth you." Here the Chaldaic language was spoken. Had Peter, that fisherman, learned the *Chaldaic* language? Again, it is testified by Eusebius that he preached at Rome, where the Latin language was spoken, and confounded Simon Magus, who had fled from his rebuke in Asia to Rome. He quotes Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, as saying that the seed of the Gospel had been planted by Peter and Paul at Corinth and at Rome: "For both of these, having planted us at Corinth, likewise instructed us; and having likewise taught in Italy, they suffered martyrdom about the same time." At Corinth the Greek language only was spoken. The same writer, Eusebius, says that Peter appears to have preached through Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia. Thomas, he says, according to tradition, received Parthia as his allotted region; and, in reading the memoirs of Buchanan, who visited Asia, we find that he discovered evidence of the existence of a Christian church, called The Church of St. Thomas; so that we have, even to this day, evidence of a sect of Christians in Asia bearing the name of that apostle. Andrew received Scythia; and John, Asia, where, after continuing some time, he died, in Ephesus.

In all these countries languages foreign to the Galilean apostles were spoken, and such as they began to speak in the day of Pentecost, and such as they doubtless went out speak-

ing, to "preach the Gospel to every creature," as their commission required them to do. That John spent his time and died in Asia, is the uncontradicted testimony of all historians. Philip preached in Phrygia. Polycrates, Bishop of the church of Ephesus, A. D. 190, is quoted by Eusebius as saying, "For in Asia two mighty luminaries have fallen asleep: Philip, one of the twelve, who sleeps at Hierapolis; moreover, John, who rested on the bosom of our Lord, he also rests at Ephesus." This is the testimony of history about one hundred and fifty years after Christ, and about one hundred years nearer to the apostles than we are to the landing and history of the Pilgrims in New England, and the commencement of our institutions.

Pontarcus, a Christian philosopher and evangelist, who travelled from Egypt through Arabia to India, found there, on his arrival, some who were acquainted with the Gospel of Matthew, to whom Bartholomew, one of the apostles, had preached.

Eusebius, from whom we collect this testimony, wrote in the reign and under the patronage of the Roman emperor Constantine, about three hundred years after Christ.

We have more documents relating to our history, probably, than Eusebius had; but still, if we had nothing more than he had, and the traditions of three hundred years, any man of talents, and research, and honesty, could make out the bones of American history. Eusebius gathered all that was known in the Roman empire from documents and tradition: he wrote under the patronage of Constantine, and had access to all the lights which the empire, through all its provinces, both near and distant, could furnish; and his is therefore a credible history. It is the first regular history of the church extant, and probably the first ever written. He quotes his

authorities; some of which exist, and others are since lost. But he lived at a time when, both by tradition and by written documents, historical truth was accessible.

We now come to the question whether the Christian religion was authenticated by miracles, as its founders and disciples allege. And we have arrived at evidence that they did rest their claims on miracles, before the Jewish nation and the Roman empire; and that in three hundred years, against all possible resistance of civil and ecclesiastical power, through ten bloody persecutions, they succeeded in supplanting the Jewish and Pagan religions, and in the establishment of Christianity.

Could this have been done, if the miracles recorded were not true, and were known to be false, by every man of the generation to whom Christianity was *first* preached? To bring the case home,— could a young man of mean parentage and obscure life, and without a common-school education, rise up at this day, and supplant both the Protestant and Catholic religion of North and South America? Could he gather round him twelve men more ignorant than himself, and in three hundred years revolutionize to his own nearly all the religions of the world? Suppose his disciples *should* believe his miracles *against their senses*, could a nation, a world, be made to believe them, had they not been wrought? Is it possible that such a young man could so far impose upon the world as to oust the Protestant religion of North America, and the Catholic religion of South America, and the Pagan religions of the world, without actually convincing the generation around him, by the evidences of their senses, that he wrought miracles? Would it not in itself be the greatest of all miracles, if the two religions should pass away, and his own pervade the whole continent in two or three hundred years? No

miracle could be greater than this. The minds of men act as uniformly, according to the laws of the senses and of evidence, as the material world pursues its course according to the laws of matter; and for such a youth of thirty-three to do such a thing, would prove, either that he wrought the miracles, or that God helped him to accomplish it, by changing the laws of human belief. If he succeeded without miracles, that is a miracle. But, suppose he claimed the power of working miracles, and appealed to them in evidence, and did convince the world, would it not be an overpowering evidence to after ages that his miracles were real? The effect would be the testimony of the first and second generations of the whole continent to the reality of his miraculous attestations.

So Christianity stands. Christ rested on his miracles: "If ye will not believe me for my words, believe me for my works' sake." If you do not believe my doctrines, believe my miracles. You believe Moses for his miracles; I produce the same proof. What was the fact? The apostles believed the miracles. The Jews admitted them, and endeavored to account for them by Satan. From age to age, no one, whether friend or foe, thought of denying or questioning the facts, till modern Infidelity, within a very few years, has seen what would be proved if they were admitted, and has again undertaken to deny them.

And now, my friends, as the argument would be dry to make it longer, out of so many quotations, I have given you but a few specimens, to show the *kind* of argument which the *external* evidence of Christianity affords. The Gospel was preached to cotemporaries, and rested its claim to belief, not alone on the intrinsic excellence of its doctrines, but on miracles performed by its founders. These miracles were

believed by all. They could not have been believed so universally, if they had not been real. This is as certain, from the laws of the human mind, as cause and effect in matter. The religions of the day were changed by the instrumentality of a poor man, and twelve poor disciples. The *fact* cannot be denied. This could not have been done without a miracle, and this is Heaven's attestation. This is our ground of belief, that we do not follow cunningly-devised fables. It is not a mistaken credulity to believe that God so loved the world that he sent his only Son, that through him the world might be saved. Here are the Gospels quoted by historians and fathers of the church, back to the day of their origin, and down to the present time. There is no place where forgery could have been committed.

And I rest my soul upon the truth of the statement; and, my friends, will you not do it? Can we safely REJECT such evidence? I ask this simple question, *Is it safe* to reject it? The tide of evidence is irresistible. Ought we not to take the side of safety — the side of evidence? We ought to know that Christianity is *certainly not* true, before we reject this accumulated evidence. But, in the presence of such evidence, we are not permitted to doubt — to disbelieve. We are all sinners; we know it — we feel it. We are a part of a creation which groans and travails in pain, waiting for the manifestation of God's mercy. We have glorious evidence that God in his Word has provided the means of cultivating our minds and hearts for a more glorious destiny than reason and the light of nature could achieve. And let it not be our condemnation, that light came into the world, and that we loved darkness rather than light, because our deeds were evil.

LECTURE XI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

In our preceding lectures we have given an epitomized view of some of the evidences of the inspiration of the Bible. In the present lecture, I propose to state and answer some of the various objections which have been made to its inspiration, derived from its contents. Some of them have been suggested by letters, and some of them by books and conversation.

The answering of objections is a work not less important than the statement of the argument. The evil is not that we lack evidence of the truth of the Bible, but that objections are brought before the minds of those who know not how to answer them, which break the force of evidence, and leave them in an unsettled state of mind. They are poisoned arrows, which inflict venom with the stroke, which rankle in the bosom of the inexperienced youth without a remedy.

The objections against the contents of the Bible may be classed under the following heads:

I. To the language of the Bible.

II. To its morality.

III. To the recorded conduct of pious men.

IV. To things needless or trivial, or which could be known without a revelation.

I. The language of the Bible, especially in the legislation of Moses, is said to be indelicate.

The answer is: The language objected to might be so, if it were not *necessary;* but, being necessary, we deny that it is indelicate. No language is indelicate, if the exigencies of society require it as a matter of utility. On this ground, anatomical lectures, medical publications, for professional uses, instead of being censured, are justified by the most refined society. Suppose that anatomical and pathological facts should, for purposes of utility, be inserted in our legislation, as they were in that of Moses, would our statute-book be regarded as indelicate? In the case of Moses, the necessity of minute and delicate legislation was prominent; three millions of people were to be elevated from the debasement of a protracted bondage. They had lived in an idolatrous nation, and were to be raised to intellectual power and moral purity, as the depositaries of religion and liberty: but, to do this, it was necessary to interpose minute directory, prohibitory, and sumptuary regulations, to contravene, by penal enactments, various habits and practices, idolatrous or personal, which could not otherwise be repressed.

Another object of the legislation and language excepted to was the promotion of cleanliness and health. Physical impurity was as incidental to their past condition as moral. The system of ablutions, therefore, while it typified the removal of moral defilement, had an immediate reference to health and habits of cleanliness. Three millions of people were to be conducted through a wilderness, and to dwell forty years in a dense encampment of tents; and nothing, in such a case, but legislation or a miracle, could save them from destruction by disease. But God never works miracles where his purposes can be reached by ordinary causes. He therefore directed Moses to enact, even to minuteness, whatever laws might be necessary to guide and preserve a people in their circumstances.

This complex minuteness of the Mosaic code was intended

not only to prohibit crimes, which, of course, must be named, but also to separate the nation at all points from heathenism, by rendering the systems repellent to each other. The object of God was to keep up these repellencies, to prevent the Jews from engaging in idolatrous worship, or mingling idolatrous practices with their own. The efficacy of this arrangement is attested in the preservation of the Jews as a distinct people to the present day. No system of civil and moral law ever wrought with such enduring effect as the laws of Moses upon the Jewish nation. Though it has ceased to act upon them, as a nation, for two thousand years, the Jew is, to the present hour, in most of the essentials of character, what the Mosaic code has made him. There exists no other nation, in the same circumstances of dispersion and persecution for thousands of years, that has maintained the same uniformity as is stamped upon the Jewish people by this code.

Its tendency among the Jews was not to licentiousness, nor is it now. Under the Mosaic code, the nation rose, in forty years, in respect to purity, transcendently above their condition in Egypt, and equally above any cotemporary nation on the globe. And, even to this day, through all their dispersions and vexations, the tax of female abandonment has fallen with less severity upon them than upon other nations. They give fewer victims, through the brothel, to Moloch, than any other nation; and it is their alleged "indelicate Bible" that has saved them.

It is a fact, also, quite notorious, that those portions of our community which are not the most remarkable for delicacy or purity are the most embittered against the Bible: a fact not to be accounted for, if its tendencies were to licentiousness. Why do they not provide the Bible in places of licentiousness as a text-book of impurity, and place it under

their pillow as the quietus of a guilty conscience? No one has ever made such a mistake, or ever will. The licentious know and feel that the Bible is the most terrible book the world has ever seen to persons of dissolute habits.

And no ancient nation, whose religion and laws were licentious, ever maintained such permanence and purity, and intellectual and moral power, as the Jewish nation have maintained. Through all time they have been among the most intelligent, sagacious business men. A chief occasion of their civil disabilities has been for the protection of nations against their shrewdness and enterprise: they were afraid to admit them to a fair competition in trade; and when, in the face of all these difficulties, they amassed wealth, they withdrew the protection of law, and plundered them; and yet, amid all these difficulties, they have made themselves the depositaries of wealth, and the financiers of the world, — have brought kings to their feet, and swayed the destiny of empires. During the Bonapartean wars, the Rothschilds held the balance of power, and gave or withheld, at their pleasure, the sinews of war; and, for the last fifty years, Jews have been among the most learned and efficient members of various cabinets of Europe.

II. The morality of the Bible is said to be defective.

1. One instance has been suggested to me by letter. It respects the punishment of the young prophet, seduced by an old prophet to disobey the order God had given him. (1 Kings 13.) Now, it is said that, since he had the authority of a prophet for what he did, it was hard that he should be punished for what he supposed God had allowed him to do.

But how does the case stand? The young prophet knew that God had charged him to eat no bread and drink no water in the place to which he sent him, and not to return by the way that he came. And what was his authority for supposing

that God had reversed these directions? The word of a stranger, who claimed to be a prophet, without any evidence of the fact but his own word; who did not himself profess to speak by inspiration, but said that an angel told him that he (the angel) was inspired by the Lord to direct him (the old prophet) to bring the young prophet back, without any evidence, but his own word, that the hearsay story was true. It was, therefore, the naked word of a stranger, allowed to set aside the express known direction of Heaven. When human laws are enacted and published, no parole testimony can justify their disregard; and when God speaks and his prophet knows it, he must abide the consequences, if he confides in the hearsay testimony of uninspired man, to set aside the authority of God. He was punished, therefore, as Adam and Eve were, for disregarding the authority of God, on false testimony: he knew who sent him,—he did not know that God had inspired an angel to tell the old prophet to turn him back.

2. Again: the demand of Moses, that Pharaoh should let the people go three days' journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifice to God, is supposed to imply duplicity; as if, under a false pretence, he intended to effect their escape by stealth.

But the imputation suggested is not sustained by the text. It was the will of God to commence the conflict by making the demand small at first, letting it move on from one demand to another, till complete. Moses did not say to Pharaoh, *This is all we ask.* It is manifest that he asked a part only, first, of the whole to be insisted on in the progress of the conflict. By this he did not waive his intention to claim the whole. I see no duplicity in this. Certainly there was no temptation for any. If it be intended to implicate

God, the answer that exonerates Moses from duplicity equally exonerates him.

3. It is objected, that the direction to the Israelites to *borrow* of the Egyptians, when about to leave the land, not expecting to return, was an act of fraud.

Remember that this direction came from God. Still, it is not the less objectionable, if wrong. We must meet the objection, and vindicate the character of the God of the Bible. But the whole objection is made by the translation. The original word, in its common use, does not mean *to borrow*, — i. e., to ask and receive under a pledge of repayment, — but simply *to ask for;* and this appears to be its meaning here. The Israelites had been enslaved and defrauded, for many generations, of their just wages; and, on leaving the land, they were directed by Heaven to ask or demand of the Egyptians such aid as their exigencies required, — and it was granted with as much alacrity as it was asked.

4. The command of God to let the people go, and his hardening the heart of Pharaoh, so as to prevent his compliance, has been the occasion of great objection, and has caused perplexity even to believers.

But to all such objectors it may be said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures."

If God hardened Pharaoh's heart by direct omnipotence, he would be the author of sin, and would punish for the nonperformance of what he himself had made impossible. This would have been an objection which could not be answered. We would not try to answer it. If he had commanded obedience, and then cancelled the evidence of his authority, and thrown the mind of Pharaoh into doubt and vacillation, — if he had urged his claims by motives in words which he cancelled in

deeds,— if in any way he had tempted Pharaoh to obduracy, by giving him reason to think it safe or proper to disobey,— we should be no advocates of such a course. It could not be justified.

But what is hardness of heart? and how did God harden Pharaoh's heart? Hardness of heart consists in great voluntary obstinacy in refusing to obey God. If God hardened his heart only by reasonable demands which he refused; by the exhibition of evidence which he disregarded; by the presentation of motives which he resisted; and by granting respites which he perverted to augmented obstinacy; — then did he harden his heart in no sense unworthy of his benevolence and wisdom, or which afforded to the obstinate king a cloak for his sin; in no way but in the regular administration of his perfect government. It accords with the nature of mind and free agency, that obligations violated shall harden the heart — that evidence slighted shall harden the heart — that mercies abused shall harden the heart — and that judgments despised shall harden the heart; — and there is upon record no evidence that God in any other way hardened Pharaoh's heart. It is not said that he did it by a secret omnipotence; on the contrary, the antecedents of his obstinacy were the repetition of demands, of evidence, of motive, of forbearance, and discipline, followed by augmented incorrigibleness. It is certain that God did nothing direct, and irresistible in its consequences, to bring out that hardness. The positive cause was Pharaoh's pride and obduracy of disposition, which scorned to yield, and which punishment only tended to make more unyielding, and to work up to a more rebellious spirit, gathering from calamity itself a momentum of determination to resist God, till he saw that resistance was vain.

If I endeavor to dissuade my neighbor from intemperance,

by the proper motives, evidence, and persuasion; and in gaining a victory over my arguments he hardens his heart still more than if I had said nothing; I have not done improperly, though I have been the occasion of hardening his heart. If a parent attempts by discipline and remonstrance to reclaim a wayward son, and if all his endeavors fail, those very endeavors only producing the effect of making that son overleap boundaries which he would not have overleaped, and commit crimes he would not have committed, but for the parent's correction,— if the parent has thus hardened the heart of his child, and called out a giant power of determined opposition which did not show itself before,— is the sin at the door of the parent, or the son? The parent hardens his heart, as God hardened Pharaoh's; and so do I, when I preach the Gospel to you, and you disobey it — for if it does not soften, it hardens your heart. "It is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." But do I therefore do an improper thing? Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel faithfully, day after day, though under my unavailing preaching greater hardness of heart settles down upon you.

God, then, hardened Pharaoh's heart in no sense inconsistent with his benevolence, and wisdom, and perfect government. According to the language of the Bible, he is said to do what he permits, or does not prevent; and in this sense only is it said that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and never that he hardens the heart by the direct exertion of his power, having for its object the augmentation of human obstinacy and wickedness. On the contrary, he brings the precepts and motives of his government to bear upon the sinner with great power, wisdom, and good will; and he, by resisting and disregarding them, hardens his own heart. If this were wrong, it would be wrong for God to govern a world in

mercy which does not obey him: for, inevitably, his goodness abused would harden the heart of every subject.

There is nothing in the case of Pharaoh, but its prominence, different from the principles and results of the divine administration in its effects on us all, every day. Universally, the repetition of neglected admonition hardens our hearts; the perversion of mercies, and the disregard of judgments, harden our hearts; just as this course on God's part, and the same conduct on the part of Pharaoh, hardened his heart: it is according to the course of nature in the moral world, as really as that fire should burn, or poison destroy, in the natural. God must stop his remedial system, or else harden the heart of those who obey not: he must stop commanding, stop entreating, stop his mercies, stop his judgments, stop the strivings of the Spirit, or harden the heart of the disobedient. He must annihilate them, or harden their hearts; for, were he to cut them off from earth and send them to hell, obligation and evidence would follow them there, and disobedience forever harden their heart. It is at our option, whether the providence of God shall bless or harden our hearts.

This view of the subject corresponds with the universal representation of the Bible. In the case of Pharaoh it is said that God hardened his heart, as he afforded light and enforced obligation; and it is said, also, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, as he resisted the obligations and motives of the divine government. Thus, Isaiah is said to have hardened the Jews, by urging upon them repentance and reformation, whether they would hear or whether they would forbear. It was in the same manner that the same nation filled up the measure of their sins, in the time of our Saviour. And the sin against the Holy Ghost seems to be such a

malicious, wilful resistance of evidence and motive, as God by his renewing grace will never overcome. The ground whose end it is to be burned is that which, under the best cultivation, produces thorns only and briers.

5. Again: the order given by God, to exterminate the Canaanites, is supposed to be inconsistent with his benevolence. But who is it that has constituted the laws of nature, by which eight hundred millions are swept from the earth every thirty years? And why is it? If the inhabitants of earth were loyal, would death thus reign? Is it not the result of insurrection against God? And is it not just to restrain the madness of a rebel world? And has he not a right to punish incorrigible nations, and by such instrumentalities as his wisdom deems most appropriate? Will the Almighty, in the day of judgment, apprised of his unbenevolent severity, apologize to the victims of the flood, and to Egypt, and Nineveh, and Babylon, and Tyre, and Jerusalem, and to the Man of Sin, for his exterminating judgments? What would be the result, should God abdicate the throne, and permit nations to violate with impunity the constitution of their nature, and the laws of his moral government, but anarchy, the most intolerable condition of social being, which, by its lawless violence, would, with a more intolerable vengeance, cut off the generations of men? It was of the Lord's mercies that the Canaanites were not exterminated long before; but if the punishment of nations be just and necessary, has not the God of heaven a right to select his own executioners? Or is it more unbenevolent for God to appoint men to apply the penal sanctions, than for human governments to do the same? Suppose the sheriff should refuse to execute the laws upon robbers and murderers; would his clemency be approved, while the rights of life and property are continually set at naught?

God, then, selected one nation to exterminate other nations, for the violation of the natural and moral laws of his government. He might have chosen earthquake, fire, or pestilence. But he chose other agents; and they, with miraculous evidence of his aid, fulfilled their vocation. These nations, like the world before the flood, had outlived the end for which society is formed, had trodden under foot all the laws, and baffled all the motives of the divine government, till extermination became the only remedy. For, so tenacious is God of his moral government by laws and motives, that when nations go beyond the pale of moral restraint, God will not interpose his omnipotence to save them: extermination is then at once the penalty and the remedy. Thus, the early race of man was exterminated by the flood, the cities of the plain by fire, and the Jewish nation were driven from their land by the sword, and the voluptuous Roman empire supplanted and renovated by hardy barbarians. And thus were the nations of Canaan exterminated. This is the great law of providence. Crimes that supersede the moral government of God are, to nations, unpardonable sins.

But, besides these purposes of punishment, the territory was needed for the establishment and defence of God's government of mercy on earth, by rearing a republic — the world's first and last hope. The worship of God was fast failing, and the night of an everlasting idolatry was settling down upon the world, forming the horrid union of priestcraft and despotism, dooming the earth to eternal chains and darkness. It is certain that darkness would have descended upon the world, with idolatry and despotism, whose iron sceptre has always gone together with chains and lust and blood. It was to stop this dark stream of pollution, that a fountain was opened

to pour down through distant ages light and life, till all the nations should be purified and blessed. It was to stop the progress of a power that was crushing the mind and heart of the world, and tending rapidly to its perpetual bondage; and to plant a city of light and liberty, whose walls should be salvation, and whose citadel should stand against the armies of darkness, till the light of the world and the desire of nations should come. And here, far back in time, the foundation was laid of all the liberty, civil and religious, that has since blessed the world. Was the war of our independence inconsistent with benevolence? But, had not the Lord exterminated the Canaanites, and set up the light-house of coming ages, we had never seen the light, nor felt the power, by which Christ makes nations free: we should have had no battles of liberty to fight, and no independence to enjoy; and the first ray of civil liberty for our world would have been like that of the star whose distant light has not as yet reached the earth. If God had not fortified his religion against idolatry, by right judgments, and true laws, and a high, protecting providence, the whole earth, from that day to this, had been in chains. The conflicts with the Canaanites were the battles of the Lord for the world's liberty — THE THERMOPYLÆ OF THE EARTH! The god of idolatry was drawing his dark veil over the world, when God came in, and planted and defended a nation, chosen to transmit religion and liberty to distant generations. This blest inheritance, through his tender mercy, has come down to us from our Puritan fathers; and we have no cause to wear sackcloth, and keep fast-days, for the sins of the Jews, nor for the sins of our fathers in fighting the battles of the Revolution: and let not those who justify the latter condemn the former.

III. Another objection is found in the sins of pious men,

placed on record in the Bible; as, the sin of Abraham, in the practice of deception, through fear.

But, to understand the subject, it must be considered that they are recorded as historical facts, and recorded as sins, according to the whole morality of the Bible, and are never eulogized as virtues, or so recorded as to be mistaken for examples for imitation, but rather for our warning. I can perceive, therefore, no respect in which the inspiration of the Bible should be implicated, unless it should be —

1. That the inspired historian does not always stop, when he makes the record, to say that it is a sin; or,

2. That such sins as are recorded are inconsistent with piety, and yet are found in those whom the Bible recognizes as righteous.

As to the first,— that they do not always stop to reprobate the sins of good men which they record,— I answer, that they had no need to do so. The sins alluded to are *notoriously* such, according to the Bible. The historian might as well stop to inform us that theft and murder are high crimes, or the philosopher, lecturing upon the sun, take a candle to show us his dark spots, as the historian of the Bible, amid its overpowering light, stop to point out the dark spots in Christian character. There was no need of animadversion. Was not the crucifixion of Christ a crime? And yet the four evangelists simply relate it, without note or comment; and, wonderful to tell, their touching history of the persecutions, sufferings and agonies, of their Master, is recorded by his bosom disciples, just as the most frigid and impartial historian would have written it — without denouncing it as a crime, and without comment in the language of grief and indignation. There was no need of interjections on the subject. The simple, truthful narrative of meekness and affection, is

more sublimely powerful, than all possible amplifications of language could make it.

2. In respect to the sins of good men recognized in the Bible being inconsistent with piety, it must be remembered that the Scriptures do not claim that Christian character is wholly exempt from sinful defect. The teaching of the Bible is, that all men are by nature without holiness; have turned their hearts away from God, and set their affections on things below; that, in regeneration, the chief end of man is changed from the love of the creature supremely, to the supreme love of God. But the Scriptures do not teach that the moment a sinner is converted, his heart is brought into *perfect* accordance with the law of God, and continues so, without a single transgression, to the day of his death. Christian love is permanent and supreme; so that no Christian ever becomes for a moment an enemy to God, and totally depraved. But the Scriptures do not teach, nor does experience evince, that there is in the regenerate no sinful deficiency in this love, and no alloy of selfishness, and worldliness, and pride, and ambition, and constant liabilities to temptation and sin. Religion, in the beginning, does not extirpate entirely any one sinful passion or affection which belongs to our common depraved nature. It impairs the power of every one, and relatively gains strength in every conflict and victory. A new empire is set up in the soul, but it is in the presence of a long-established and vigorous opposition. To sin, a deadly wound is given; but it is given to a giant, in whom a fearful vitality yet remains, and who terrifies the victor with frequently renewed and powerful onsets. Religion has conquered; but it holds its dominion over captives impatient of subjection, and ready every moment to mutiny and throw off the yoke. Of course, religion, in moments of temptation and

insurrectionary violence, does not prevent the commission of actual sin, and sometimes, though not often, of flagrant sin; habitual sin it does prevent. No known, palpable immorality can be persisted in, without extinguishing the evidence of Christian character; and yet the history of Abraham, and David, and Peter, admonishes us that men of unquestioned piety may be overcome by temptation. If angels, and our great ancestor, Adam, might fall from a state of perfect rectitude, what is the imperfect Christian, that he should be thought incapable of being overcome? And yet, how often do we hear the argument against experimental religion urged upon principles which imply that, if a man is a Christian, he must be sinless! "Is not such a thing wrong?" Yes. "Well, then, how can such a one be a Christian?" Because Christianity is the commencement, and not the consummation, of spiritual life; the first beatings of which are feeble, and powerfully counteracted by all the antecedent tendencies of sin, and power of habit. The church is not a palace, where none but the perfect associate, but a conservatory association, in which the first movements of holiness are cherished, and strengthened, up to the confirmed and perfect health of heaven. But shall the skill of the great physician be questioned, and the efficacy of his prescriptions and the progress of his patients be denied, because, all the way to heaven, symptoms of disease hang about them? Is the man who has been sick not convalescent until his health is perfectly restored? Is not the subject of suspended respiration rescued, until all the debility, and every injurious effect, of drowning have disappeared?

If the doctrine of regeneration were, that men, on becoming Christians, became perfect, the world might well indulge the most inveterate incredulity; but to insist upon it that no new

affections have begun to operate in the heart, so long as the evidence of relative imperfection remains, is as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural, and contrary to fact.

It is not inconsistent, then, with the inspiration of the Bible, for men who have become Christians to have defects. God has decided that no man is sufficient for his own preservation; holiness is not a self-sustaining principle; our sufficiency is in Christ; by the grace of God, we are what we are. God has not promised that he will preserve the regenerate from all sin: but he has promised that sin shall not have habitually dominion over them; that the righteous shall hold on his way; that though the good man fall, he shall not be utterly forsaken, because the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

It must be observed, however, that the actual and prominent sins of good men are not habitual or permanent traits of character. No liar, or drunkard, or murderer, can inherit the kingdom of God. No habitual liar is anywhere recognized as a good man, in the Bible; and no drunkard. It is recorded of Noah, that once he was inebriated; but his sons were evidently surprised at it, as an uncommon event, and a great sin and shame, and, with filial delicacy, they walked backwards and threw a garment over him. The sin of David was not habitual; he himself deplored it most bitterly, was punished for it most fearfully, and, with a broken heart, repented of it all his days. The sin of Peter was not habitual; it was the result of sudden and powerful temptation, upon an excitable and precipitant temperament, and, as soon as it was committed, was followed by bitter tears of godly sorrow. Even human laws distinguish between sudden killing, under strong provocation, and deliberate premeditated murder.

Other objections, equally specious and efficacious upon the popular mind, might be adduced and answered; but the time will not permit. None of them, however, are better founded than these, and they do not justify doubt concerning the inspiration of the Bible. My wonder is, that a book written at different periods, through the long lapse of so many centuries, should be so uniform in doctrine, so pure in its morality, and the characters of its good men so excellent, and itself open to so few exceptions. The difficulty is not that there is not evidence enough to sustain the claims of inspiration, but that there is too much, and spread over too great a surface, to be read and appreciated by many. Men engaged in the avocations of life have not time to travel through volumes, and, being unacquainted with argument and fact, are not prepared to encounter the shallow arguments of infidelity. My aim has been to select a few of the fundamental evidences of divine inspiration, and to show that the argument is logical, and the evidence conclusive, and that it goes to rivet on reflecting minds the proof that the Bible is a book of divine origin — Heaven's gift to man, to guide his footsteps till the day dawn and the day-spring from on high visit him; that it is not merely the iron-bound volume of duty, and restraint, and punishment, but the friend of man for time and for eternity,— the friend of liberty, of science, of industry, of the people, and especially of the laboring classes and the poor. It is the world's friend, the light of the world, and the life of the world; God's wisdom and benevolence condensed in the smallest possible competent popular form, exerting the most benign intellectual and moral influence upon the human mind. No other book ever exerted so powerful an influence in dispelling popular ignorance, in alleviating the pressure of despotism, and the debasement of idolatry. No book so

embraces the cottage and the throne, and all between; so illumines the whole world, so invigorates the intellect of man, and so exalts and ennobles our race. It contains a comparatively perfect model of republican government, belonging to distant ages; and has been, and now is, and will be, the only hope of the world's elevation to universal civilization, and universal civil and religious liberty.

I am happy to know that the preceding exhibition of the republican tendencies of the Bible has been satisfactory, beyond my expectation. For multitudes have slept over or misunderstood the elementary wisdom and benevolence of the Old Testament. The book has been slandered, misunderstood, ridiculed, abused, and neglected, while the evidences of its origin and sublime contents have been unknown. I have endeavored to bring you, as patriots and republicans and Christians, on to the side of the Bible, — to show you that it is the people's book, the working man's book, the poor man's book, able, if cordially received and obeyed, to fulfil all the purposes of God's comprehensive benevolence in the elevation of our race. God grant that these views may come home to your judgments, may fasten upon your consciences, and bring savingly the influences of the Bible upon your hearts! And when all men shall thus receive the Bible, then will the world be happy, and one blessed republic of benevolence and brotherhood unite the nations of the earth, and the earth itself be restored to the glorious fellowship of the universe of holy minds!

LECTURE XII.

PROPHECY.

We have considered, in previous lectures, the nature and reality of miracles, as authenticating a revelation from God. It is said, however, that miracles, though admitted to be satisfactory to those who witnessed them, are no evidence to us who did not see them; for, how do we know they ever took place? But I have shown that the existence of a nation of peculiar and unparalleled institutions, coëxisting with the miracles, and confessedly founded on their reality, is evidence of their existence. We have seen that, if the miracles were not real, those peculiar and forbidding institutions could not be founded on them. The miracles and institutions also come down cotemporaneously from the beginning; a miracle, itself, if they were not real. The same is true of the Christian institutions. The era is settled. They assume to be based on miracles wrought before the eyes of those who died asserting the doctrines of the Gospel, and who spent their lives in the support of its institutions.

The evidence of the senses, it is admitted, is more impressive than any proof of a fact not seen. What is seen comes to the mind more easily than what is proved; but the well-established certainty of an event, when it is proved, does, in many cases, render the fact as certain to the mind, and create just as really an obligation to believe, as if it were a

matter of vision. Who doubts the existence of the Revolutionary War, any more than if he himself had mingled in the shock of battle? Is any one the less certain of it? Not a whit. Yet he has not seen it. Who doubts that the Declaration of Independence was signed by those whose names it bears, at all more than if he had stood by and seen the names written? The *fact* that Jefferson, and Adams, and Hancock, signed it, with the others, is in every respect as certain, and its results as obligatory on us, as if we had been actually eye-witnesses to the deed. So it is with the miracles of Moses; so with the miracles of Christ and the apostles. The fact is ascertained, then, that miracles were wrought in attestation of a commission to reveal the will of God to man. And in whatever way the *fact* is made certain to us, its evidence for the revelation is as real as though the miracle had taken place before our eyes; for it is its *existence* which includes the sanction of Heaven, and not the medium through which we are apprized of it. The obligation, therefore, in either case, is alike imperative, to receive the divinely authenticated records.

It is admitted, however, that a wider field is open for cavil and perplexity and doubt, in respect to matters of evidence, than where we have the testimony of the senses.

It is to meet this waning of impression, and facility of evasion, that God has condescended to authenticate his revealed will by another kind of miracle, which travels down the stream of time, and grows in its impressiveness in proportion as the evidence of miracles wanes, and accumulates upon us its authentications with the lapse of ages. If the one, like a cone, converges with distance, the other, like the cone reversed, expands; and both, side by side, constitute a body of evidence of equal diameter through all time.

This new species of miracle is called prophecy, and consists in the miraculous and extensive foretelling of future events, such, and so many, and so complex and various, that no finite mind could grasp the knowledge; as much beyond the powers of created mind, as miracles indicate power beyond the capacity of finite beings. It is a miracle of knowledge in one case, just as truly as it is a miracle of *power* in the other. God brings omniscience to authenticate his word in one case, and omnipotence in the other. Omnipotence is stamped on miracles, omniscience on prophecies.

The point necessary to make out the authentication of prophecy as a miraculous event, is the *fact*, that finite minds are no more omniscient than they are omnipotent, and that it surpasses the power of created minds to foretell an extended and complex series of far distant future events. When, therefore, developments are made including omniscience, it proves the inspiration of the records *by prophecies*, as much as developments including omnipotence prove their inspiration by *miracles*.

The impossibility, to created minds, of extensive complex accurate predictions of persons and nations, amounting to biography and history, ages before their existence, has been universally conceded; and, if denied, may be conclusively shown. Consider the utter incompetency of any man to predict accurately his own history for a single day. Who knows, and which of us can predict, the events of to-morrow. Perhaps the existence of the working man, whose days consist of a repetition of the same labors, like the movements of a clock, may be guessed at with tolerable accuracy; but where we go out into the tide of human affairs, and find our own free actions so interwoven with the actions of other minds and the unanticipated events of Providence, and so diversified in their

choice and action by those unexpected turns of thought and conduct which occasion volition, no man, however mechanical his life may be, can tell, in respect even to his own conduct, what a day may bring forth; much less write his own history for a month or a year, and still less foretell what will be his character, life, and conversation, through a considerable number of years. Which of you can sit down to-day, and write his own history for the year 1852? Try it. Write out what you will do and say, where you will be, and what will be your condition and character for that year. You cannot do it. You cannot anticipate one-half the circumstances accurately. There is nothing more impenetrable than human history, in advance of time, unless it be the counsels of Heaven, and the darkness around the throne of God. This fact is so well known, that familiarity makes it forgotten. We do not think how very little we know even of our own personal history, ahead of the present moment. But put one hundred thousand of these *minds*, blind to the futurity of their own condition and occasions of action for a single day, together in a city. Ponder upon the complex action of that city, and write its history for a month, or a year. Let one hundred thousand ignoramuses put their heads together to make out future knowledge with respect to the complex nature of the whole. Can they do it? They can do no such thing. The difficulty is multiplied by the aggregate of individual ignorance concerning a single day, blended into the far-reaching complex actions of a month or year. Throw, then, all the cities of a nation together,— all these minds, in so many thousand unseen and inexplicable modes acting and counteracting upon each other,— and who can write the history of a nation? Throw the impulses of millions of such minds together, amid all the relations of commerce,

agriculture, science, arts, and government, with the lusts, appetites, and prejudices, of each one of the mass; where constant changes of condition, circumstance, motive, and choice, are going on, multitudinous as the particles of water in the ocean, and where the minutest event may change with giant power the tide of events through eternity: take these for your data, and write off your nation's history; sit down, with nothing but present appearances for your guide, and delineate the image and body of the times for ages to come. You might as well write the history of ten thousand beehives, all in swarms,— "confusion worse confounded," "in wandering mazes lost." Finite knowledge can do no such thing. It is just as impossible as to create worlds or govern them.

The truth of these remarks is illustrated by the constant failure of mercantile hopes, from changes in the providence of God unforeseen, when their plans were wisely laid in the presence of existing circumstances. But a large class of merchants would make no failures, if the circumstances taken into view at the commencement of an enterprise were always realized. What is the matter? Why were not all the circumstances that could affect the success of the enterprise taken into view? Because the merchant had no telescope to look into the future — no telescope that could take into the range of its comprehensive vision all the circumstances in the depths of time to come. We cannot do it. Look at the stretch of mind and extent of information demanded in the financial concerns of nations, and almost of the whole world; and yet, with all this, behold the wreck of human hopes by changes and losses which none could foresee! In the midst of confidence, some occurrence, some circumstances as unforeseen as uncontrollable, dash the wisest plans. One reason why the celebrated Rothschilds have succeeded so generally

is, that they have got so much of the business of nations into their hands, that they can *make* circumstances, and *compel* circumstances; otherwise they would be as weak as other men. The deep darkness which shrouds even the near and fast-coming results of the political history of nations, attests the impotency of the greatest minds to lift the veil, and read connectedly the events of coming time. Pitt said, that he had observed the plans constructed, and the predictions made, by wise men beforehand, with respect to political movements, *and never knew them to hit right;* and surely his own plans did as little answer his anticipations. He was a man of stupendous mind, learned in history and in politics, and he knew human nature well; but yet all his continental coalitions were blown up, and he died in despair, exclaiming, "O my country!" He did not know his country or the plans of Heaven; he felt as if his country was gone, because *his* plans of saving her had failed. Yet the gallant ship moved on, and his country has increased in power and prosperity since his death more than before.

But if we consider the affinities and reciprocal influences of the family of nations upon one another and upon the world's destiny, whose but the mind of the Eternal Omniscient can, ages before the events, place in a distinct and legible record portions of the history of the complex action of the mind of the world, each individual of which is free, and contributes to make out the complex result? No mind, but the Creator's, can solve what will be the future character and conduct of the eight hundred million minds of the world, all free agents, acting upon each other in ten thousand various ways, and constantly shifting their mutual relations, like the particles of water in the ocean, to make out the history of the world. Yet nearly the whole past and future history of the

world is written in prophecy. It is in the Bible. How came it there? I cannot verify this to-night by extracts, because I have not time for so extended an exemplification in a lecture; but the fact is so, and will be amply proved, to him who will examine the proof, in "Newton on the Prophecies."

Whoever, then, professing to be commissioned by God to reveal his will to men, is enabled to record the character and history of illustrious persons, ages before they are born,— and to record the great outlines of the history of nations, comprehending nearly the history of the world, ages before it came to pass, — has the same divine attestations to his commission for coming ages, as he who works miracles affords to the senses of existing generations. Cotemporary minds require miracles, and rest satisfied with the proof; but the same man records another kind of miracle, whose growing light in distant ages will compensate for the waning of the other. To foretell, then, future events, is a miracle as really as to stop the sun, or control the elements, or raise the dead.

Another point essential to the evidence of prophecy is, that it was unquestionably written before the biographical or historical record claimed as its fulfilment.

There must be evidence that the predictions of the Bible, which we rely on, were made and recorded anterior to their historical fulfilment. And I would repeat here the two signal providential events already premised, respecting the prophecies of the Old and New Testament. Of the predictions that we especially rely on, respecting the Christian dispensation, the written evidence is contained in the Old Testament; and it was so ordered in the providence of God, that the language in which they are written ceased to be a living language about six hundred years before the events took

place. They were stereotyped in a dead language about six hundred years before the Christian era; and they remain, like the mummies of Egypt, embalmed for an imperishable testimony that the prophecies they contain were not written after the events. The wide gulf which lies between the *record* of these infallible prophecies and the time when they were fulfilled makes it impossible to deny the prediction or the fulfilment, and impossible for any but God to have foreseen the certainty of the events predicted.

Another point of importance is, that their fulfilment in history should contain, not merely some *agreement* in a single or a few particulars which might be accidental, but a description of character, or national history, so full and various, and through such an extended period of time as no accidental concurrence of circumstances can account for, any more than any complex design can be accounted for without a designer. A prospective history, through years, of an individual or a nation, can no more be the result of an undesigning, accidental concurrence of circumstances, than the creation of the world itself, so full of endless varieties of design, could come into being and beautiful order without a Supreme Designer. We have in the Old Testament a biography of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, it may be possible for anybody to say that a man will be born one thousand years hence, having this or that trait of character common to many men; but he cannot draw a character unique, original, peculiar, and which never existed on earth before, nor will again till he comes in flaming fire.

It would take volumes to illustrate all the predictions of the Bible and their fulfilment — nor is this my design. My only object in this lecture is to apprize you of the nature and sufficiency of the evidence of prophecy to authenticate a divine

commission, accumulating with time as the evidence from miracles is impaired in its facilities of exhibition and power of impression. My great object is to exhibit the *philosophy of prophecy as evidence of a divine revelation;* to set before you a few brief examples of this evidence, only as specimens, that the principle may be realized; and from that to refer you to the books of the Old and New Testament themselves for your minute examination, and to such commentators and writers as have expounded them.

I might notice the prediction, that while the land of the Jewish nation rested the seventh year, the sixth should produce double; and that, when thrice a year all the males went up to Jerusalem and left their land defenceless, their enemies should not invade it. Compare these promises with the evidence of their history, that they were punished with famine only when they refused to suspend cultivation on the seventh year, and were vexed and invaded and carried captive only when they neglected their national convocations, and the support of God's worship. What lawgiver would dare to make such ordinances, if he had not a just confidence in the power of God to make good his word? Suppose the Legislature of Ohio should prohibit planting and sowing one year in seven, and predict that the sixth year should produce double; how would it insult the common sense of the people, and expose their own folly!

I might go on to state to you predictions concerning Ishmael and his posterity: that he should dwell in the midst of his brethren, and should be a wild man, his hand against every man's, and every man's hand against him. Read the well-authenticated history of the Arabians, his acknowledged descendants,— there is no question on the point that he was their ancestor, any more than that Abraham was the

ancestor of the Jews,— and as face answers to face in the water, so the character of the Arab answers to the prediction. We cannot find a history that will not confirm, with overwhelming proof, the fulfilment of that distant and most graphic prophecy. It is fulfilled with wonderful exactness in every one of its predictions of their unique traits of character, and of their geography, and location, by every account that has ever been written of that singular people.

I might point, also, to the prophecy of Jacob concerning his sons, and their geographical location. By a careful inspection, it has been ascertained that Jacob must somehow have seen the chart of the relative portions of the land of Canaan, as the maps now disclose them; and yet the tribes cast lots for the portions which they should respectively inhabit, and they came out exactly as he had predicted. Whose eye saw the chart, and held it up to the vision of Jacob, if it were not the eye of God?

The destruction of Babylon by Cyrus was predicted by Isaiah one hundred and sixty years before the event, and by Jeremiah fifty years before it. In these predictions the destroyer of Babylon was called by name,— not the name by which he was then familiarly known, but the name by which he was afterwards called, as the instrument of God's indignation upon this guilty city. It was predicted that the besieging army should consist of various nations under Cyrus. This is as it happened. Read Rollin, or any ancient history, and you will find the prediction verified. (Compare Isa. 21: 2,— 13: 4, 5,— Jer. 51: 27, 28,— with Xenophon; Cyrop, B. v. c. iii. 38,— B. vii. c. v. 15.) Again: the river was to be dried up, the gates left open, and the city taken by surprise, during a night of revelry and drunkenness. The river Euphrates passed through Babylon. Cyrus let

off the waters by canals in one night, and let his army in through the channel; the city was buried in intoxication, and was slaughtered. (Compare Isaiah 44 : 27,— Jer. 50 : 38,— Jer. 51 : 36,— Isa. 14 : 1,— Jer. 51 : 39, 57,— Isa. 21 : 45,— Isa. 47 : 11,— Isa. 47 : 9, with Herodotus i. 191.) It was predicted, also, that the place should be forever uninhabited — a dwelling of wild beasts, and a place of stagnant waters. And as this is so significant, and as I wish to give you a just conception of this prophecy as a specimen, I will read the predictions in full, and then the fulfilment. I read from Prof. Stowe's Lectures on the Bible, a work which I recommend to all who wish to enter upon the study of the Bible, as containing much miscellaneous information, too little understood, respecting the Old Testament.

Scripture Prophecy. — "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces." (Isa. 13 : 19—22.) "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant. They shall roar together like lions; they shall yell as lions' whelps." (Jer. 51 : 37, 38.) "I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Isa. 14 : 23.)

History. — "The Persians destroyed a part of the city:

time, and the negligence of the Macedonians, destroyed a part." "It is now almost entirely deserted; so that we may safely say of it what a certain poet said of Megalopolis, the great city of Arcadia,— 'the great city is now a vast solitude.' " (Strabo, B. 16.) "Babylon, once the greatest of all cities which the sun ever looked upon, has now nothing left but the walls." (Pausanias, B. 8, c. 33.) "I have learned from a certain Elamite brother, who came from those parts, and now lives as a monk in Jerusalem, that the royal hunting-grounds are in Babylon; and that wild beasts of all kinds are kept within its walls." (Jerome, Com. in c. 13.) "I soon distinguished that the causes of our alarm were two or three majestic lions, taking the air upon the heights of the pyramids. We then rode close up to the ruins; and I had once more the gratification of ascending the awful sides of the tower of Babel. In my progress, I stopped several times to look at the broad prints of the feet of the lions, left plain in the clayey soil; and by the track, I saw that, if we had chosen to rouse such royal game, we need not go far to find their lair. But, while thus actually contemplating these savage tenants, wandering amidst the towers of Babylon, and bedding themselves within the deep cavities of her once magnificent temple, I could not help reflecting how faithfully the various prophecies had been fulfilled." (Sir R. K. Porter.) "The tower is still to be seen, and is half a league in diameter; but is so ruinous, and so low, and so full of venomous creatures, which lodge in holes made by them in the rubbish, that no one durst approach nearer to it than within half a league, except during two months in the winter, when these animals never stir out of their holes." (Ranwolf.) "Not only a great part of this plain is little better than a swamp, but large deposits of water are left stagnant in the hollows

between the ruins; again verifying the threat denounced against it." (Sir R. K. Porter.)

Strabo, whom I have quoted, is good authority for historical facts. He is the first whose history I have read on the subject — the earliest, and nearest the time of the destruction of Babylon.

Sir Robert K. Porter, who visited them in 1820, is the most recent and accurate observer of the stupendous ruins of this ancient city, once the greatest city on earth — beyond the reach of fear, and able to scoff, as she did, at her enemies from the walls. I read in childhood that the place where Babylon stood was forgotten, and could not be found. It is not forgotten; there are mountains of rubbish there. In 1820, this European traveller, commissioned by the Russian government to visit the ruins, brings out this testimony to the fulfilment of the predictions of Isaiah, which, written three thousand years ago, contain an accurate description of the present condition of the city.

I might add, in further illustration, the history in prediction of the rise and downfall of empires, connected with the history of the church: the Assyrian, Medo-Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman; with the rise of Mahomet, and of the Papal ecclesiastical empire; of which predictions we read the exact fulfilment on the pages of the most authentic history. But this would carry me over too broad a field; it would require too many extracts from the Bible, and from history, travels, &c., for the compass of this lecture. I must select only two or three examples.

I will refer, first, to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the universal dispersion, and persecution, and preservation of the Jews as a distinct people, predicted in the Bible; and the

fulfilment of these predictions, recorded by Josephus, and other historians, thousands of years afterwards.

The predictions are contained in Deuteronomy 28: 52—57; where the terrors of the siege are foretold. "And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land which the Lord thy God hath given thee; and thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee; so that the man that is tender among you and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave; so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat; because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates." It is even predicted that "the delicate woman shall eat her young in secret," during the famine and terrors of this awful siege. (Verses 56, 57.)

Such are the predicted terrors of the siege of Jerusalem. Now, let any one read Josephus, describing the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Josephus was a Jewish historian, living and writing shortly after the event. He relates that the Romans besieged and took several fortified places before they took Jerusalem. "And forasmuch," says Josephus, "as wives squeezed the food out of the mouths of their husbands, and children out of the mouths of their parents, and, what was most miserable of all, mothers out of the mouths of their babes." (See Jewish Wars, Book 5, chap. 10, sec. 3, page 1245, Hudson's edition.) "Wherever, in any house, but the shadow of bread appeared, instantly a battle ensued, and they who had before been on the most

friendly footing fought against each other with the greatest fury, that they might carry off some miserable scraps of their sustenance." (Book 6, c. 3, sec. 3, page 1274.) In the same book we read of a noble woman, distinguished by her birth and wealth: "The tyrants, indeed, had by this time plundered her of all her sustenance, &c. Afterwards, having dressed her child, she devoured one-half of him, and, covering up the remainder, she secretly reserved him for another meal." (B. 6, chap. 3, sec. 4.) Again: Moses predicted great destruction of life. Josephus says, "But of them who perished by famine throughout the city, there was an incalculable multitude." (Jewish Wars, B. 6, c. 3, sec. 3, page 1274.) "And during the whole siege there perished eleven hundred thousand persons." (New sec. 3, page 1294.)

It was also predicted that they should be carried into Egypt and sold as slaves. "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, 'Thou shalt see it no more again;' and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you." (Deut. 28: 68.)

It appears from Josephus, that when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, of the captives who were above seventeen years, he sent many bound to the works in Egypt; those under seventeen were sold. But so little care was taken of these captives, that eleven thousand of them perished for want. The markets were quite overstocked with them; so that, Josephus says in another place, "they were sold with their wives and children at the lowest price, there being many to be sold, and but few purchasers." (Jewish Wars, B. 6, ch. 8, sec. 2, p. 1288.) "Having chained the males that were above seventeen years of age, he sent them down to the works which were in Egypt; but such of them as were below that age, he sold.

While Phronton had charge of the captives, eleven thousand perished through want." (B. 6, ch. 9, sec. 2, page 1291.) Jerome says, "After the last destruction which was brought upon them by the Emperor Adrian, many thousands of the Jews were sold; and such of them as could find no purchasers were transported into Egypt. Of these last, many perished by shipwreck, or famine, or were cruelly massacred by the Egyptians." (Jerome on Zech. 11, page 1774, vol. 3, Benedictine edition.)

This is the testimony of history. But they were not only to be plucked off from their own land, but also to be dispersed into all nations. "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one [illegible] even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve [illegible] neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would to God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would to God it were morning! for the fear of thy heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." (Deut. 28: 64—67.)

"And where is the nation," says Newton, "which is a stranger to them, or to which they are strangers? They swarm in many parts of the East, are spread over most of the countries of Europe and Africa, and there are several families of them in the West Indies. They circulate through all parts where trade and money circulate; and are, as I may say, the brokers of the whole world." There is no other fact like this. All history and all travellers record their dispersion,

and presence as a distinct people in all parts of the world — over Asia, Africa, Europe, and America. It was predicted thousands of years ago; and the thing is placed before our eyes just as it was predicted.

"But," to pursue the prediction, "though they should be so dispersed, yet they should not be totally destroyed, but subsist as a distinct people, as Moses had before foretold." (Lev. 26 : 44.) "And what a marvellous thing is it, that after so many wars, battles, sieges,—after so many years of captivity, slavery and misery,—they are not *destroyed utterly;* and, though scattered among all people, yet subsist as a distinct people by themselves! Where is there anything comparable to this to be found in all the histories of all the nations under the sun?" (Newton on Prophecies, vol. I. p. 97.) The fulfilment is before our eyes, and all generations are witnesses of the miracle. We did not see the miracles of old; but, we read the prophecies, and behold their fulfilment, before our eyes. We see the prophetic miracles as clearly as the Israelites saw the miracles of Moses.

It was predicted, also, that they should suffer much in their dispersion, and should not rest long in any place; "and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest." And, "They have been so far from finding rest, that they have been banished from city to city, and from country to country. In many places, they have been banished and recalled, and banished again. We will only just mention their great banishments in modern times, and from countries very well known. In the latter end of the thirteenth century, they were banished from England by Edward I., and were not permitted to return until Cromwell's time. In the latter end of the fourteenth century, they were banished from France [for the seventh time, says Mezeray] by

Charles VI.; and ever since they have been only tolerated, not having enjoyed entire liberty, except at Metz, where they have a synagogue. In the latter end of the fifteenth century, they were banished from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella; and, according to Mariana, there were one hundred and seventy thousand persons who left the kingdom. Most of them paid dearly, to John II., for a refuge in Portugal, — but within a few years were expelled from thence, also, by his successor, Emanuel; and, in our own time, within these few years, they were banished from Prague by the Queen of Bohemia." (Newton, I. 97.)

It was predicted, also, that they should be oppressed and spoiled evermore; and their houses and vineyards, their oxen and asses, should be taken from them; and that they should be sorely oppressed and crushed always, &c. &c. "And what frequent seizures have been made of their effects, in almost all countries! How often have they been forced to redeem their lives with what is almost as dear as their lives — their treasure! Instances are innumerable: we will only cite a historian of our own, who says that Henry III. 'always polled the Jews at every low ebb of his fortunes. One Abraham, who was found delinquent, was forced to pay seven hundred marks for his redemption. Aaron, another Jew, protested that the king had taken from him, at times, thirty thousand marks of silver, besides two hundred marks of gold, which he had presented to the queen; and in like manner he used many other of the Jews;' and when they were banished, in the reign of Edward I., their estates were confiscated, and immense sums thereby accrued to the crown." (Newton, I. 97, 98.)

It was predicted, also, that their sons and daughters should be given to another people (Deut. 28: 32). "And, in several

countries, and in Spain and Portugal particularly, their children have been taken from them by the order of the government, to be educated in the popish religion. The 4th Council of Toledo ordered that all their children should be taken from them, for fear they should partake of their errors; and that they should be shut up in monasteries, to be instructed in Christian truths. And when they were banished from Portugal, 'the king,' says Mariana, 'ordered all their children under fourteen years of age to be taken from them and to be baptized: a practice not at all justifiable,' adds the historian, 'because none ought to be forced to become Christians, nor children to be taken from their parents.'" (Newton, I. 98.)

It was predicted, also, "that they should be mad for the sight of their eyes which they should see" (ver. 34). "And into what madness, fury, and desperation, have they been pushed by the cruel usage, extortions, and oppressions, which they have undergone! We will allege only two similar instances, one from ancient and one from modern history. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the worst of the Jews took refuge in the castle of Masada; where, being closely pursued by the Romans, they, at the persuasion of Eleazar their leader, first murdered their wives and children; then ten men were chosen, by lot, to slay the rest. This being done, one of the ten was chosen, by lot, to kill the other nine; which having executed, he set fire to the palace, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner; and only two women and five boys escaped, by hiding themselves in the aqueducts under ground. Such another instance we have in our English history: for, in the reign of Richard I., when the people were in arms to make a general massacre of the Jews, fifteen hundred of

them seized on the city of York, to defend themselves; but being besieged, they offered to capitulate, and to ransom their lives with money. The offer being refused, one of them cried out, in despair, that it was better to die courageously for the law than to fall into the hands of the Christians. Every one immediately took his knife, and stabbed his wife and children. The men afterwards retired into the king's palace, which they set on fire, in which they consumed themselves, with the palace and the furniture." (Newton, I. 98.)

It was also predicted they should serve other gods of wood and stone (ver. 36 and 64). "And is it not too common for the Jews, in popish countries, to comply with the idolatrous worship of the church of Rome, and bow down to stocks and stones, rather than that their effects should be seized and confiscated? Here again we must cite the author who has most studied and has best written their modern history, and whom we have had occasion to quote several times in this discussion. 'The Spanish and Portuguese inquisition,' said he, 'reduce them to the dilemma of being either hypocrites or burnt. The number of these dissemblers is very considerable; and it ought not to be concluded that there are no Jews in Spain or Portugal, because they are not known. They are so much the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, but confounded with the ecclesiastics, and entering into all ecclesiastical dignities.' In another place he says, 'The most surprising thing is, that this religion spreadeth from generation to generation, and still subsists in the persons of dissemblers in a remote posterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliances, and change their names, and take ancient escutcheons; they are still known to be of Jewish race, and Jews themselves. The convents of monks and nuns are full

of them. Most of the canons, inquisitors, and bishops, proceed from this nation.' " (Newton, I. 99, 100.)

Finally, "their plagues should be wonderful, even great plagues, and of long continuance" (ver. 59). "And have not their plagues continued now these seventeen hundred years? Their former captivities were very short, in comparison: and Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied in the land of the Chaldeans; but *now* they have no true prophet to foretell an end of their calamities; they have also false Messiahs to delude them, and aggravate their misfortunes. In their former captivities, they had the comfort of being conveyed to the same place: they dwelt together in the land of Goshen, they were carried together to Babylon; but now they are dispersed all over the face of the earth. What nation has suffered so much, yet endured so long? What nation has subsisted as a distinct people, in their own country, so long as those have done in their dispersion into all countries? And what a standing miracle is thus exhibited to the observation of the world!" (Newton, I. 100, 101.) On the above topics also see Deut. 4: 25—28; Amos 9: 9; Jeremiah 4: 10.

I will now give you a concise account of a very remarkable personage whose existence was predicted in Isaiah; and leave it to you to decide to whom that character belongs. Isaiah (chapter 53) predicted the advent and history of a very illustrious individual, characterized by the following particulars:

He should be a Jew, and grow up among his people.

His claims of being their Deliverer should be disbelieved.

Himself should be despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

Though he suffered for the nation, they regarded him as being punished justly as an impostor.

He suffered to make expiation for their sins, and restore them to the favor of God.

Amid insults and sufferings, he was meek and silent. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (ver. 7).

He was to be denied the ordinary testimony of his innocence. Lowth, in his exposition of this part of the Scripture, states that it was the custom among the Jews, that when a malefactor was taken to execution, he was preceded by a public crier, who proclaimed that such a man was guilty of such a crime, and such and such witnesses had given testimony against him, and that now, if any man knew of his innocence, he might testify. It is evident that this safeguard was denied to our Saviour. "He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living" (ver. 8).

His sufferings are not to be for himself, but for the sins of his people; "for the transgressions of my people was he stricken" (ver. 8).

He was destined to be associated with the wicked in his death; but actually was associated with the rich, from an impression of the purity of his life. "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth" (ver. 9).

The sufferings were to be providential afflictions. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief" (ver. 10).

His sufferings were to result in a numerous seed, &c. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he

shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (verses 10 and 11).

Lastly, it is predicted that his cause, though despised, shall prosper, and amid conflicts and opposition he shall gain signal victories. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (ver. 12).

Now, I pray you, of whom doth the prophet speak these things? This chapter the Jews used to regard as descriptive of their Messiah. But when Christ appeared, and the Jews had done unto him as prophesied, and this chapter was held up as a mirror to them, they attempted to deny that it was prophetic of the Messiah. And Celsus and Porphyry, violent opponents of Christianity, attempted to prove that this prophecy was a forgery, an interpolation, inserted in Isaiah after the events occurred, to suit the purpose of the Christians. But they failed, or the attempt would have been its own exposure: it was absolutely impossible, in the face of a generation so familiar with the Old Testament, to have interpolated so remarkable a chapter as the 53d of Isaiah in their Bible. Beside, three hundred years before that time, it was stereotyped unchangeably in the Septuagint version, and there it remained till its fulfilment came to pass, and still remains.

And now, in respect to this argument, after an examination of the evidence, can you doubt that the predictions in the Bible were written before the destruction of Babylon, and the dispersion of the Jews; and that the predictions of the Mes-

siah were given out long before they were consummated by the coming of Christ?

What shall we say to these things? Here are the predictions in the book, and there is the evidence of history to their fulfilment ages after they were written. The prediction could not, by any possibility, have been forged beforehand to suit the events. Nor could the coincidence of these events, so exact and circumstantial and numerous, have been the result of accident alone. Enough has been proved, to show that we are not following cunningly devised fables, in taking such a book for our guide. There is no truth so true that objections will not be started against it. But the question is, Has not God set his seal on the commissions of those who wrote the Bible, which have been handed down from age to age? Do not the instances referred to in the Old Testament, do not the prophecies in question, prove that the omniscient God has sanctioned this book? If they do, receive it. In order to do this, it is not necessary to know everything about the Bible. A child can trace the plan which God has revealed; and we do not need that anything should be demonstrated in figures. All the problems in Euclid would not make it clearer. Take the *facts* as they are, and if the evidence is not conclusive, what *can* be proved? Divest your mind of prejudice, and, with prayer to Heaven, read; and, as you move on, the shadows will depart from your mind, the mists will clear away which now darken the subject. Be honest: go to the Bible itself, and study it with the prayer, Lord, let me know if this be thy word. Take all proper means to understand what you see there. Know the facts, that you may be able to judge for yourselves. And, if any man will do his best to search the Scriptures in the spirit of truth, and to regulate his heart by them, and to bring into subjection

those passions and prejudices which hinder him from acting according to the will of God, the Bible will quicken his progress; and it may be expected that God, by his Spirit, will bring his heart into accordance with the requirements of his Word.

LECTURE XIII.

THE DECREES OF GOD.

No doctrine of the Bible has been so misconceived and misrepresented as the doctrine of the decrees of God.

The more common conception has been, that God determined everything and every event in the universe which has been, or is, or will be, and brings them all to pass by his own irresistible omnipotence: that, in his own mind, he registered the universal chart of things, events, and actions, and spiked and riveted them down, and watches over them with unceasing omnipotence, to prevent their change and secure their existence: that he is the author of sin, and all volitions and actions, good or bad: that he made a part of mankind on purpose to damn them, for the manifestation of his justice — punishing them for not doing what they could not do, and for doing what they could not help: and the question is, How can God be just, or man accountable?

In this view, the doctrine is regarded with horror and hate, as blasphemous. To others, it is only another name for fatalism — a heathen doctrine baptized with a Christian name. A third class look upon the doctrine of decrees, and foreordination, and predestination, — terms all meaning the same thing,— with good-natured pity and contempt, as a matter of idle and endless speculation, upon which men and devils, if they please, may display their talents and perplex their minds, and "find no end in wandering mazes lost;" and, with

oracular wisdom and magisterial confidence, decide that the doctrines of predestination and accountability never have been and never will be reconciled. To others it seems a dark cloud, full charged with wrath and hate, from which, reluctantly, some few muttering drops of mercy fall, while punishment is the chief delight and employment of God, — a conception filling their souls with forebodings and melancholy dread.

There are some even pious minds, who believe that the doctrine of God's decrees would be seen to be true, could we see and understand it as God does, who yet admit that *apparently* it seems to be inconsistent with God's benevolence and justice and human accountability, — a doctrine doubtless true, but profoundly mysterious, — one of those "secret things" which belong to God, and which ministers and all others had better let alone, since they will only "darken counsel by words without knowledge."

All these views of God's decrees are misconceptions or misrepresentations, which, were they made with malignant heart against better knowledge, would be blasphemy.

Doubtless the doctrine has sometimes been injudiciously stated, and denounced through misapprehension by holy men; and, for the same cause, by multitudes has been regarded as inexplicable and mysterious. But, as it is revealed in the Bible, correctly interpreted, it is a doctrine not even apparently contradictory to reason or revelation: nor is it hopelessly inexplicable, or intelligible only to Christians; but may be so explained and proved that unrenewed men may see it to be true and right; so that God will be "justified when he speaks, and clear when he judges;" — while to the Christian it may become the sun of his firmament — God's system for the development of his glory, and the light and confidence and joy of the loyal universe.

The only difficulty attending the exposition and comprehension of God's decrees is, that they are so vast, and multitudinous, and various, that no single part can be understood but in its relation to the whole,— as no one of the bones of the human body discloses the wisdom and benevolence of God, but in its place and in its relation to the entire structure.

But this, instead of precluding investigation, and affording a reason for letting the subject alone, makes its investigation and correct exposition the more necessary; that the truth, and whole truth, may be understood, and all mistaken and blasphemous theories excluded. For it is a subject on which the human mind *will* speculate, and, uninstructed, will speculate wrong. The heathen lay hold of it, and wrestle with it; and childhood is awake to it, and will ask questions which neither they nor we can answer, if we do not understand and explain the doctrine; and all the misrepresentations will be set down as our views of the doctrine.

In my attempt to elucidate the subject, I shall not involve myself or you in a labyrinth of theological controversy. Instead of this, I shall give you a concise definition of the decrees of God, comprehending all the elementary principles necessary to the exposition of the subject; which principles being explained, their own light will make the subject plain, and show the doctrine to be in accordance with the nature of mind, of free agency and accountability, and of a benevolent, wise, and just moral government,— in accordance with the Bible and common sense.

The following is the definition:

THE DECREES OF GOD are *His determination to create a universe of free agents, to exist forever under the perfect laws of his moral government, perfectly administered; for the gratification and manifestation of his benevolence,*

for the perfect enjoyment of all his obedient subjects : with all that is implied therein, and all the consequences, foreseen.

That there is a God self-existent, eternal, immutable, and infinite in wisdom, benevolence, and power, has, we cannot doubt, been proved.

That such a mind will do something, we suppose will not be denied; it being as much the nature of mind to perceive, think, desire, and act in some way, as it is of matter to be passive, inert, and motionless. No one, therefore, can believe that God, from everlasting to everlasting, would sit idle on his throne, looking out into vacancy, his knowledge, wisdom, benevolence, and power permitted to stagnate; or that, being social, as benevolence always is, he would live in silence and eternal solitude. And yet, that such a mind should act without some definite desire and determination of plan, is not to be believed or conceived. It is inseparable from the nature of mind, to act with foresight, design, and plan. The man who discloses no associated thought, desire, or plan, or executive energy, is an idiot. The very thought of an undesigning Omnipotent mind on the throne, throwing out around itself at random insulated almighty efforts, is terrific. In view of such an alternative, and recognizing a God on the throne, wise, benevolent, and almighty, acting with foresight and design, the universe might burst out in ecstasy, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice, and let the multitude of worlds be glad!"

The decrees of God have respect primarily to what He will do. They are not the rule of our conduct, as they surpass immeasurably what men or angels can do; but they are the plan for the development of the plenitude of his wisdom, benevolence, and power, to satisfy his own judgment and

heart, and fill the universal heart of his loyal subjects with confidence, and love, and joy.

The two comprehensive departments of the divine plan are, the creation and government of the mental, and of the material universe.

The latter, in itself inert and motionless, God has organized in suns, and worlds, and living things, for the accommodation of minds, and to reflect upon them the evidence of his being, and the illuminations of his glory.

For the guidance and government of mind, he has provided decretory laws, developed in part in nature, and partly in the revelations of the Bible. The law of the universe of mind is the moral law, as epitomized by our Saviour, which is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." The relative duties by the discharge of which, in our world, this love is to be expressed towards God, ourselves, and our neighbor, are laid down in the Ten Commandments; and, being sinners, what we must do to be saved is taught in the Gospel.

The motives of the divine government are, the attributes and character of God, and the wisdom and benevolence of his laws, under which obedience comprehends fulness of joy, and disobedience a corresponding suffering,— and both commensurate with the endless being of his subjects.

These decrees of God are *eternal*, because God, and his knowledge, and wisdom, and benevolence, are eternal: and they are *immutable*, because, to an all-wise God, there are no plans possible better than those he has chosen, and he will not, against motive, turn from the better to the worse. Of course, "known unto God are all his works from the beginning;" his ways are everlasting; "he is in one mind, and

who can turn him?" — and still he worketh, and forever will work, according to the counsel of his own will.

That which moved the self-existent mind to adopt and execute the comprehensive plan of his wisdom, was his infinite benevolent desire to extend through the wide universe of intelligent beings the greatest amount and duration of blessedness, to be accomplished by the guidance and administration of his perfect law, and Gospel, and providential government, by the manifestation of his glorious attributes and character; it being the life eternal of the mental universe to know and love and obey God.

I will not ask how it should come to pass that the self-existent Being should be benevolent. It never did *come to pass*. His moral excellence and benevolence, which constitute his glory, and are the joy of the universe, are voluntary, and commensurate with his eternal being. It is the wonder of all wonders but one, and that is, that the indications of such immense wisdom and benevolence should have been developed in a universe of matter, without the existence and agency of a wise, benevolent, almighty mind.

This is the meaning of the scriptural declaration, that He made all things for himself and for his own glory. It was for the gratification of his own benevolence in the unspeakable, illimitable, immense, eternal blessedness of his loyal subjects.

How great the comprehensive whole will be, none by searching can find out to perfection. We only know that the Almighty, the greatest and most active and benevolent intelligence in the universe, has poured floods of blessedness through his intelligent dominions, beyond expression or comprehension great; and that this river of pleasure, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, will never fail or be limited by drought, but will roll on forever, with broader,

deeper tide, and sweeter joys, and louder praises to Him that sitteth upon the throne, working forever all things according to the counsel of his will.

Should the existence of any of his subjects become their calamity, it will become such through their own perversion of his wisdom and goodness, against the entire moral influence of his law and Gospel and government.

Such are the decrees of God — the God that made us and preserved us, and hath given his Son to die for us, and his Word and Spirit to save us, if we do not resist, and quench their influence. And in this view of the subject, each of us may say, How precious have been thy thoughts concerning me, oh God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more than I can number. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Having now defined and illustrated the decrees of God, the way is prepared to state and answer some of the various objections which, in all time, have been urged against them: and,

1. It is objected, that if God has decreed whatsoever comes to pass, there can be no such thing as free agency and accountability.

Answer: That depends on what God has decreed. If he decreed to make man a machine, then, as he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, doubtless he has done so, and man is a machine, and not a free agent. But, if he decreed to make man a free, accountable agent, then, doubtless, he saw that he could do it, and saw it to be wisest and best to do it, and desired to do it, and determined to do it, and has done it; and man, by the execution of God's decree, is made a free, accountable agent.

If a skilful artisan, with adequate power and skill, deter-

mines to make a watch, we do not expect he will make a steam-engine instead of a watch; or that to all appearance he will construct a watch, but put in a broken spring, or so misplace the wheels that it could not move, like the machine for perpetual motion, which had no defect but that it would not go.

No one thinks that, if God decreed to make a stone, he would create a serpent. And if God has foreordained to create, as his noblest work, rational, social, accountable beings, commencing beyond the reach of thought, and rolling the tide of blessedness through eternity, why should it be, that, instead of this, he has created unthinking machines, or irrational animals? Did he not understand the limits of possibility, and the resources of his power, and the dictates of his wisdom and benevolence? Every attribute of God, then, stands as a voucher that he has not changed his counsel, or marred his work by creating a fatality where he intended to create free agency.

Objection 2. But, at any rate, it is said, the doctrines of God's decrees and man's free agency are a mystery: they never have been reconciled, and never will be.

Answer: If they are a mystery, then you do not know that they are contradictory; and if they never have been reconciled and never will be, then you may safely let them alone, and attend to those things which belong to your peace which are revealed, and which you do understand.

But the decrees of God and man's free agency are not a mystery; they are two intelligible revealed facts. God has decreed to create free agents as his most wise and benevolent work, and to maintain free agency forever by the administration of perfect laws perfectly administered. But the moral government of God by laws and motives is no more coërcive than family government, or a civil republican

government. Parents form purposes concerning the character and conduct of their children, and often secure their execution by the wise and benevolent administration of judicious laws, without at all destroying their free agency, but, on the contrary, securing the needed and healthful exercise of it, by training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The constitution and laws and administration of our national government diversify endlessly the exercises of our free agency, but never destroy it. On the contrary, it is the laws and moral government of the family, and the state, and the nation, which stand between anarchy and despotism. And cannot God, as well as man, administer a moral government of institutions and laws, without destroying free agency? It is true that a government of irresistible omnipotence has never been reconciled with free accountable agency. But a moral government of institutions and laws has never been reconciled with free agency, only because there has never been the shadow of a contradiction to be reconciled.

Objection 3. But it is said, God must have foreseen all the actions of his creatures; and therefore they cannot but do just as he foresaw they would do.

Answer: The foreknowledge of God is not the cause of human actions, and is not that which makes them certain. Men may foresee what their fellow-men in given circumstances will do, but that does not compel them to do it; and God's foreknowledge that a man will commit murder no more makes it necessary than my seeing it beforehand. The Congress of the United States, when they make laws touching finance, agriculture, and commerce, foresee in many respects how men will act under them. But their foreknowledge does not destroy the freeness of the foreseen action, or make it irresistibly certain; and no more does the foreknowledge of God.

Besides, God's knowledge is according to truth; and inasmuch as he decreed to make men free agents, and knows that he has done so, he foresaw their actions as the actions of free agents, and not as the actions of machines, or the results of necessity.

Objection 4. But, it is said, if God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, then at least all actions are certain; and if certain, cannot be avoided; and men cannot be free and accountable.

Answer: The objection assumes that, in order to free agency and accountability, all the actions of free agents must be *uncertain*. But does not God from eternity know what he himself will do? — and does that destroy his freedom and desert of praise? — and is not the obedience of saints and angels certain,—and is it, therefore, not voluntary and praiseworthy? — Do not all wise men lay out their work, and know beforehand what they will do,— and does this destroy their free agency, or make them machines?

But, if the certainty of an action excludes free agency and induces fatality, the foreknowledge of every man, as to *what he will do, for an hour before he does it*, destroys his freedom as really as the eternal foreknowledge of God destroys it; and, to secure free agency to God, angels, or men, it becomes indispensable that they all should act without any plan or knowledge of what they will do, even a moment before they do it, — constituting a universe of minds perfectly ignorant of whatever they will do, until it comes to pass.

Then it would seem to follow, that, if a man has been honest all his life, and the merchants and mechanics have all found him honest in his dealings with them, for forty years, he has, in the judgment of all, made his honesty so certain as completely to destroy his virtue, and even his free agency and

desert of good or evil. It is the glory of God that he is freely and immutably good; of his angels, that they will freely and forever obey him; and on earth, the more certain it is that a man will cleave to the ways of truth and rectitude, the higher his estimation,— while the more certain a man is to lie, and steal, and swear falsely, the deeper the condemnation and disgrace which come upon him. Does a man become a machine, whose certainty of honest dealing commands universal confidence; and is he only to be canonized as a free agent and a virtuous man, whose eternal alternations of honesty and knavery are such that no mortal can tell what he will do?

Whether the certainty of action destroys free agency, depends on *who makes the certainty, and how it is made.* If God makes it by irresistible omnipotence, it excludes accountability. But if the free agent, in the regular exercise of all the powers of a free agent, under the perfect laws and administration of God, *chooses* and acts, the choice and the action, though certain, are his own. He makes the certainty.

It was certain to the mind of God that you would be present here this evening. Were you forced to come? Could you not have stayed away? Did you not come freely? Then you know experimentally that certainty and free agency are consistent, and that it is you, and not God, who make the certainty which he foresees.

I ask one of you to lift your hand. Do you not feel that you are fully able to do it? Do you not feel that you are just as able to let it alone? Whichever you do, you will exercise a conscious free agency. But it is impossible to do both, and God sees which you will do, and your free agency therein.

Objection 5. But God executes his decrees. He brings to pass, by a resistless, inexorable omnipotence, what his hand and counsel have determined.

Prove this, and you have gained your point. If God compels volition and action, man is not a free agent, and accountable for his deeds.

But assertion is nothing; and where is the evidence of God's coërcive power, in the production of choice and action? Has any one seen this coërcive action of Omnipotence? Has any one felt the irresistible coërcion, or seen the apparatus with which he manufactures volition in a man, as men sift shot from the lofty tower?

Objection 6. If God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, then is he the author of sin.

Answer: If God creates free agents, and places them under his perfect moral government, and brings the influence of his law, Gospel, and providence, to restrain them from sin, and allure them to obedience, then is he not the author of sin, though his subjects should transgress. Parents whose children pervert the influence of their excellent character and faithful government are not the authors of their children's sin; and governments which prohibit treason, which still comes to pass, in opposition to the whole influence of their benign and faithful administration, are not the authors of treason.

Objection 7. It is said that motives act upon the mind mechanically, and have the same relation to volition that natural causes have to their effects.

What is a *motive?* It is some good offered to our acceptance, or evil to be avoided; but what resemblance is there between the acceptance of offered pleasure, and the smell of a rose, or the taste of an apple, or driving a nail with a hammer, or splitting a log with beetle and wedge, or raising a building with the screw, or hoisting the mainsail of a ship with the tackle, or prying a rock up with fulcrum and lever?

Did any one ever find himself split in twain, or screwed up, or hoisted, or pried up, by motive, or driven without will or against will?

Motives do not act mechanically on the mind; they are merely the occasions of choice, in the view of which mind makes its diversified elections, and without which it could not act freely at all. For who could choose where there is no object of choice before the mind?

It has been alleged in evidence of physical coërcion, that men in the same circumstances act alike, as uniformly as natural causes produce the same effect in the same circumstances. But it is just as consistent with free agency, that men in the same circumstances, and in view of the same motives, should choose alike, as that they should differ. Offer a bribe to a thousand honest and honorable men to betray their country, and they would all act freely, and act alike; offer the same to a thousand unprincipled desperadoes, and *they* will act freely, and will act alike. But we need not spend time to disprove that which is disproved by the eternal purpose of God to create an intelligent universe of free agents, to be governed by perfect laws, perfectly administered, for the manifestation of his benevolence, and the happiness of his subjects.

But, to settle the matter, let us lift the veil, and see and examine what the influences are by which God administers his moral government. Indubitably they are all comprehended in the moral law, the Gospel, the providence of God, and the influence of his Spirit, including the rewards of obedience and the penalties of transgression. But does the moral law compel men to sin? It requires them to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; and their neighbor as themselves. And the

motives are, an immortality of the most perfect blessedness, or of corresponding evil, the fruit of disobedience. And do these precepts and these superlative motives, all concurring to secure obedience and deter from sin, compel men to sin? Their entire influence is the other way,— to restrain from sin; and were it not that rebellion actually prevails, we might be tempted to think disobedience against such motives impossible. And it is not by them that men are forced to sin, but the power of a desperate free agency of self-destruction, that triumphs over them. It might just as well be said that the attraction of gravitation dissociates and scatters the planetary system from their parent sun, as that the motives of eternal life and eternal death compel men to withdraw from the attractions of divine excellence and joy, and, as wandering stars, to roll in blackness of darkness through interminable woe.

Does the Gospel, then, compel men to sin? Certainly its motives are greater than those of mere law,— the greatest in the universe of God, awarding to obedience greater blessedness, and to transgression greater sufferings; and in the Gospel, God the Father, with paternal importunity, commands and entreats men to repent,— and God the Saviour invites and entreats, and when they demur expostulates, and when they have sinned away their day of grace weeps over them. And does this love of the Saviour, which passes knowledge, force them to sin?

The Providence of God is the administration of motives, in the form of mercies and afflictions. But knowest thou not, O man, that the goodness of God does not constrain thee to sin, but leadeth — tendeth — to repentance? and that afflictions are the rod of paternal discipline, made necessary by incorrigible wickedness, and employed as among the last remedies, by merciful Heaven?

Do the strivings of the Spirit deter men from obedience, and compel them to sin? His strivings are all just the other way, and the influence he employs is that of the law, and the Gospel, and the discipline of mercies and afflictions, in the providence of God. *And it might as well be said that all the rivers in creation are compelled by the attraction of gravity to run up-hill, as that God, by his law, or Gospel, or providence, or Spirit, compels men to sin.*

Objection 8. I did not make myself, — God made me such as I am.

But is self-creation essential to accountability? And are none accountable but those who made themselves? Then, who is a free accountable agent? Not God, surely, for he did not create himself. Not angels, nor men, nor devils, for none of these made themselves; and, if self-creation is essential to free agency, there is no such thing, — never was and never will be. For how is a non-existent agent to commence the work of creating himself before he exists? — *nothing* begin to energize to create *something*, and so great a something as mind, free, accountable, and immortal?

Moreover, are you sure that your constitutional powers of mind and body are entirely such as God made them? Has no adverse variation come upon them, through the medium of temptation, by the consent of your evil and deceitful heart?

What perversion is there of constitutional powers in infancy and in early childhood? How few are the aberrations compared with those of early youth, and these compared with riper manhood!

It has been said that the perversion of our constitutional powers is occasioned by the earlier development of the passions and appetites, before reason and judgment and conscience have laid their hand upon the helm, amid the perils

of inexperienced navigation. But the fact is otherwise. The wisdom and goodness of God are eminently manifest in preparing the young voyager for the perils of life, when passion and appetite make their insurrection and onset. The family is prepared for their safe retreat, where protracted dependence on parental care inspires affection and fidelity on the one part, and obedience on the other. The susceptibility also of childhood favors the work of early government, and deep and lasting impressions, and powerful associations and habits of virtuous nature, and renders even discipline and self-government easy and permanent, which in riper age might be impossible and unavailing.

The early intercourse of parents and children in the family affords frequent and long-continued opportunities to instruct and form the pliant and susceptible minds of children.

So, also, the disposition of young children to place implicit confidence in their parents, gives them a great ascendency, and blessed opportunities for the work of instruction and impression; and so great is it, that the fulfilment of parental duty, through the course of instruction and government which God has appointed in the family, would lead us to anticipate early the era of their conversion, rather than the insurrectionary triumph of appetite and passion. Moreover, the distinctions of right and wrong, and reason, and conscience, gain a powerful ascendency during the period of family discipline, before the dangerous passions and appetites become the sources of temptation and danger. Usually, during the first twelve years of childhood, all those storms of passion and appetite sleep, which afterwards wreck so many youthful navigators. Instead of being, therefore, the period of premature temptation and ruin, the morning of our day is the most clear, mild, even, and munificent, of divine and parental

care. It is a fact, that the best and most powerful and abiding impressions are made then; the foundations of future principle and efficacious habits; the landmarks which the floods do not sweep away; the cords which, when winds and waves beat, hold the ship, and bring it into port. Instead, therefore, of childhood and youth being the corrupting age, and a constitutional work of God, it is the conservatory, forming age, without which the experience of subsequent life will be a universal shipwreck.

But you follow nature, you say. And what is the nature which you follow? God is a very large portion of nature, and your relation to him, as your Creator, the upholder of your being, the author of all your blessings for the present and the future life. Do you follow Him? Do you recognize and fill up the relations in which you stand to him? Do you love him, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which is life eternal? Do you love yourself, and observe the various laws of your own nature? Do you heed duly the laws of nature around you, and never, by their perversion, make them the instruments of ruin to yourself? If you do this, you are a healthy, happy, holy man, — otherwise, you are much mistaken in supposing you follow nature.

Objection 9. It is said that the decrees of God imply the immutability of the laws of nature, and supersede the efficacy of prayer, and the use of means for personal or national safety; and that prayer and fasting, to avert personal or public calamities, are of no more avail to that end, than they are to suspend the attraction of gravity.

This is an objection published in a newspaper in Boston, in consequence of a recommendation by Congress of a day of fasting and prayer, with reference to the commencement of cholera in several of our cities.

My answer (which, at my request, was published in the newspaper at the time) is as follows :

The objection belongs to a Turkish and not a Christian philosophy. It is a Turkish way of abolishing fear and obtaining tranquillity in danger, to persuade men that their fate is so immutably fixed that there is no hope of change even from God; — that he has constructed the ponderous machine, adjusted its wheels, hung on its weights, swung the pendulum, and turned his back upon it, and his ear from the cry of the hapless millions who fall in the course of its bloody track. To my mind, this is a terrible philosophy, and this a horrible world to live in, where prayers, and hopes in God's mercy, the last recourse of the impotent and guilty, are cut off by the shears of an inexorable fate. It is a philosophy, also, which virtually subverts the moral government of God over nations, and the interposition of a particular providence, to meet, in answer to prayer, the exigencies of individuals, families, and nations.

The reality of the divine moral government over nations is inscribed on every page of history in the Bible, and its necessity to restrain men from sin has been fearfully attested by the animalism, and anarchy, and ferocity, which rolled the wave of desolation over the nation which denied God's being, and blotted out his Sabbath, and burnt the Bible, and wrote over the gates of their burying-grounds that death is an eternal sleep. That, heretofore, God has employed physical causes as motives in the administration of his moral government, is as certain as the records of his Word. Cold and heat, day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, peace and war, sickness and health, have been employed by Heaven as motives to obedience and restraints from sin; and do operate to diversify indefinitely and continually the moral

influence under which all the millions of mankind act and form their characters. Now, is all this endless variety of moral influence, with which physical laws are clothed, wholly unmodified by the wise and merciful interposition of a particular providence? Is all this extent and variety of motive, which brings home to the bosom of every free agent on earth three-fourths of those influences which decide his action and character, hung on one great wheel, whose constant turning brings them round so as rightly to divide, and wisely to apply to each subject, his portion of moral influence in due season? All the laws of nature march right on, without variation in themselves, or shadow of turning; but the shades of human character and conduct are so innumerable and constantly changing, that the laws of nature could not hit, one time in a thousand, nor one time in millions, the complex moral changes in a city, a nation, or a world. You might as well fix all the guns of creation in one direction, to hit all the birds in creation, that in all directions travel the air. If this were possible to God, to men it does not appear a very probable theory of the manner in which God actually administers his special moral government, and can scarcely fail to disarm the providence of God of its entire power as a moral administration. But, suppose the ever wakeful supervision of Heaven, instead of this great wheel, watching with tireless benevolence over the concerns of every individual and nation; in whom all live, and move, and have their being, and on whom they wait to receive their meat in due season; from whose warm heart and open hand, by the ministry of his agents, cometh every good and perfect gift; who made the laws of nature to produce their results, by the modifying influence of his power, and wisdom, and benevolence in moral government, and not to make a splendid display of mere mechanical ingenuity, but

like his law in the hand of a mediator, to be employed, for purposes of judgment and mercy, in the government and redemption of a sinful world. Then why should not the application of these laws vary as the character and conduct of his subjects under their administration vary? The whole apparent difficulty is created by supposing that God made the laws of nature for a splendid, high, and dreadful immutability, utterly inconsistent with the variations and uses demanded by a moral government. But if a moral government was the primary and original design, and the foundations of the earth were laid, and the heavens spread abroad, and the atmosphere poured out, and all material agents formed, as subordinate in the hand of God to this design; why, then the various and modified uses of these laws, by Heaven, for punishment or protection, graduated by the conduct and character of his subjects, no more imply a change of these laws, than the farmer's various applications of the implements of husbandry imply a change in his plans of agriculture, or in the laws of earth. To change the laws of nature, their attributes must be changed, or they must be applied to uses for which they were not made. To employ fire for purposes of frost, poison for nutrition, water for respiration, and the solid earth for navigation, and the ocean for purposes of agriculture, would be to change the laws of nature; but to use these elements for indefinitely various and different purposes, as the wisdom of God may indicate, in the manner most efficacious for the moral government of nations, implies no change of plan or law, except on the gratuitous assumption that these laws were made only for the purposes of a stately immutability, and that God preferred to administer his moral government by a comprehensive mechanism, rather than by the modifying influences of his continual wise and benevolent supervision.

I now beg leave to say that this supposed immutability of nature's laws, so as never to be suspended, or accommodated to purposes of moral government, is, in my apprehension, a mere assumption, wholly unsupported by evidence.

If it can be shown that their immutability will bring out the best results, then, doubtless, they are immutable. But is it quite logical to take this for granted? And where is the evidence of the fact? How does it appear that the most perfect system may not be one, and is not one, in which the great laws of nature shall be sufficiently uniform in their operation for all the general purposes of science and experience, and yet be liable to such suspension, or variation, and application, as shall afford evidence of a divine interposition, and the means of authenticating the communications of the divine will, and demonstrating the continuance of God at the helm both of his natural and moral governments? Are not miracles — the great seal of Heaven, which none can counterfeit, to authenticate divine communications; and, if need be, to display the presence and agency of God among his unbelieving and mutinous subjects — just as important in their place and for that particular purpose, as the benign stability of nature's laws in other cases? If there were not a general uniformity of nature's laws, miracles and judgments would have no significancy; and if there were a strict immutability, they would have no place: while general uniformity and occasional innovation meet precisely all the great exigencies of the providential government of God for the ultimate moral renovation of the earth.

Hume has asserted that any innovation upon the laws of nature is contrary to all experience; but he had not lived in all time and everywhere, and how did he ascertain what had been the past universal experience of the whole world? He

could learn it only from history, while there is not in any nation a history, fabulous or inspired, which does not attest the existence of some supernatural interposition. If he meant only, contrary to his own experience, that would no more prove universal immutability of nature's laws than the experience of the torrid zone would disprove the existence of ice in the frigid.

I have only to add, that the philosophy of the immutability of the physical laws of the universe, as unaffected by human guilt, or penitence and prayer, and the various exigencies of the divine moral government, seems to me entirely unscriptural. I do not mean that all who have adopted it are infidels; for it is a specious philosophy, all of whose relations and bearings are not immediately perceived. But I do mean that it is in my view wholly and irreconcilably adverse to the entire testimony of the Bible; so that no man can be a full and consistent believer in the inspiration of the Bible, and at the same time a disciple of this philosophy.

According to the Bible, the government of God over nations is a moral government, universal and entire; and his dominion over the material world, in the administration of a particular providence, accommodated to the purposes of moral government, and diversified according to the exigencies created by the character and deeds of his subjects, for punishment to the incorrigible, and for purposes of forbearance and forgiveness to those who break off their sins, and turn to God, is announced and repeated with equal clearness and frequency on the sacred page. All the great laws of nature are the ministers of his court, — the body-guard of his throne, — to check rebellion, and keep back his mutinous subjects from presumptuous wickedness, as well as to encamp around about those that fear him, and bear messages of mercy to him that

is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word. He sends rain or drought, mildew and murrain, and pestilence and famine. Let it not be said that all of this is poetry, or allegory, or Jewish philosophy. It is poetry inspired of Heaven, and philosophy taught of God, which holy men of old spake and recorded, as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance. It is true that, in the Jewish nation, for the purpose of special effect in the protection of the religion and worship of Jehovah against the encroachments of idolatry, the principle of temporal rewards and punishments according to character and deeds was rendered more emphatical than it could have been by the regular course of the laws of nature, unattended by miraculous interpositions. But the same general principle is recognized as extending to all nations. The eighteenth chapter of Jeremiah might suffice to prove this. But whoever reads the prophecies, and profane history, will find in the one predicted visitations upon nations according to character and deeds, and in the other the record of their literal fulfilment. And whoever will sit down at the feet of Christ may hear from his lips that God clothes the grass, feeds the ravens, arrays in beauty the lily, numbers the hairs of our head, and notes the fall of the sparrow.

I should not have troubled you with this communication, if I had not regarded the philosophy which I oppose as subversive not only of the Bible, but of the doctrine of the providential government of God, which gives force to admonition, and hope to reformation and humiliation and prayer. Upon the necessity and power of a retributive providence to purposes of national morality, I need not amplify. It appalls the hardened sceptic. It cools the delirious fever of worldliness, and tames the madness of passion, and puts out for a time the fire of ambition. It rouses the thoughtless to consideration, and

sends its terrific notes of loud admonition into high places of voluptuous guilt, as well as the low places of vulgar vice, while in thick showers, and with deadly aim, its arrows fall upon the retreats of crime. And it carries into all ranks and orders of society a deep and all-pervading sense of absolute dependence upon God. When mists which no man can dissipate gather about the sun, and his rays fall cold and powerless upon the earth — when the wind, with steady breath, for months, blows contaminated atmosphere across the Atlantic — when the destroying angel has passed the highways of nations and the barriers of the north, and has received his commission and commenced his work in the great cities of our land, — who does not feel that it is time to proclaim a fast, and to convoke the people to acknowledge the hand of God, and to put away all evil-doing, and supplicate mercy of the God who spared Nineveh, and would have spared even Sodom, if there had been only ten righteous persons to pray for it? — especially when the visitation finds us so eminently fitted for destruction, — our Sabbath falling before cupidity, the influence of the government of God before infidelity, and our national morality before temptation; while from abroad and at home masses of ignorance, and filth, and crime, are rising up in our cities, to mock Heaven, and serve as the conductors of his burning indignation.

To the preceding argument, we add, that the particular providential government of God, in answer to prayer, corresponds with the natural feelings of all men, and constitutes between this world of sin and a merciful God more noble and more blessed relations than can possibly be maintained by a government of immutable eternal laws.

If, some six thousand years ago, God put in order, on the stereotyped chart of nature's laws, the cares and sorrows

which betide each individual, with their corresponding supports and deliverances or punishments, according to our character and deeds; making no provision for special interpositions of his providence in answer to the prayers of his children; then, with a tenacious memory, and keen vision, and strong faith, we might, amid clouds and darkness, thread our way upward through nature's works to nature's God.

But this view of the subject would throw us back an immeasurable distance from God, our father and benefactor,—like the sun, invisible to the naked eye, and seen only by the telescope in the depths of space. It is what God has done once, ages ago, and by one act and by one impulse of his heart; and then the system moves on by the energy of that one immutable will. No bow of hope appears upon the bosom of the dark and distant cloud, and no paternal smile illumines it, and no warm heart opens the bountiful hand in the dispensation of mercies new every morning and fresh every evening. It is a cheerless and dark philosophy in a frozen world.

Our greatest difficulty in sorrow is darkness of mind, and fear, from a sense of sin, and dim apprehensions concerning God,—an unrealizing state of mind,—the veil upon the heart. But a world made and governed once for all, by laws which God has stamped on matter, is poorly calculated to overcome this malady; and would rather strengthen unbelief, and extinguish hope. While the system in which these laws are the instruments of his power, and the high ministers of his court, the all-surrounding agents by whom he flies to our relief, bring him with intense illumination into his own world. — "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." — This fills the world with his presence, not as a non-resident

occasional visitant, but with his benignant eye constantly upon us, and his ear open to our cry; and sets the Lord always before us, on our right hand and on our left.

The government of the world in answer to prayer is eminently calculated to restrain from sin, and give energy to the law and the Gospel of God.

The effect of bestowing pardon and blessings, unasked, upon a world of rebels, would be to create stupidity, and presumptuous expectations of impunity in sin. What if pardon were sent after thieves and robbers, and obtruded upon them unsought, — would it not encourage fraud and robbery, by the well-sustained hopes of impunity? Do not personal reformation and the public safety demand that men should feel their guilt and danger, and repent, and reform, and supplicate the mercy of God, and receive pardon through faith in the atoning blood and righteousness of Christ?

The exigencies of temptation, also, are often as perilous to our souls, and as disproportioned to our strength, as the power of the elements is to our frail bodies. What, then, shall we do, when assailed by temptation? Have we no resource but the laws of nature? — Then are we undone. For these may be the very laws we have broken, and include the penalties which we have incurred. And since they act upon our own perverted nature, they give potency to temptation, with no resources to sustain us under it. For to maintain its power without punishment, or to punish and yet reclaim, is what the law cannot do.

Have we, then, no resources in prayer? — but, when the tide comes in, must we be swept before it, and wait for its ebb, when it turns? Alas! before the flood turns, we are wrecked, and by its ebb shall be stranded and lost. We need, in the

varieties and floods of temptation, a present help, which the laws of nature do not possess, and God only can afford. In the very acme of our danger, if prayer may not avail, we are without hope. But we have a Saviour who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and who, having himself been tempted, is able and willing to succor them that are tempted.

A providential moral government, administered with reference to prayer, is efficient, beyond all others, in producing hope and enterprise. It includes the pressure of necessity, and a sense of impotency, associated with earnest desire, and the cheering influence of hope in God.

But take away the last, and you substitute the impotency of blank despair. For prayer is always for aid where human efforts are unavailing; but environ the mind with danger, and fill it with intense desire of escape, and cut off the hope of divine aid, and you create the sullen, stupid inaction of the sailor in the storm, when all hope that he shall be saved is taken away. But, desire and impotency, coupled with hope, constitute the most powerful spring of action which can be applied to mind in distress.

Again, since God is wise and good, we should expect that he would provide, in this world of error and lies, some adequate means of finding out the truth. But we witness and experience the imbecility of reason and philosophy to settle and satisfy the mind; and the laws of nature give no response to the inquiry, What is truth? But has God left us to grope in total darkness? Is there no remedy but speculation, — ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth? If God does not hear prayer, there is no remedy.

But, for such a one it is written, in letters of fire, upon

the inspired page: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." Do the laws of nature, in their onward march, give such responses?

This dependence upon God, as answering prayer, moreover, renders us sincere and diligent and faithful in our researches. By nature the heart is deceitful; and prejudice and appetite and passion bias the judgment, and often men think they are candid, when, in fact, they are deeply prejudiced, and pertinaciously opposed to the truth. But when a man goes alone before his Maker to pray that He will grant him wisdom to know the truth, the responsibilities of honesty, and sincerity, and candor, and faithfulness, are pressed upon him, with a power as nearly unevadable as possible, and he has the best prospects of divine guidance.

We should expect, also, from the wisdom and goodness of God, that he would administer his providence in such a manner as would create the deepest sense of dependence, and a living, unwaning gratitude for benefits received. But the blessings of Providence bestowed on us, the results of a general divine benevolence, by the agency of general laws, do not affect us as do those blessings which imply a present personal interest, and a kind attention to our necessities. Man is so constituted, that experimental knowledge is, of all knowledge, the most real, impressive, and efficacious.

Let a man, without any sense of hunger, be *told* that his system demands nutrition daily, and that God supplies it insensibly, or that he is sick, without any perception of weakness or pain. — No evidence of this kind would make him feel the reality and value of the divine benefactions, like

meeting the *felt* demands of hunger, and staying the ravages of *painful* disease, and that *in answer to prayer*.

It is by wants multiplied and felt, and made known to God by prayer, and providentially answered, that a fresh and inspiring intercourse is kept up between ourselves and God. The gratitude which attends the blessings of education, the protection of law, and even the atmosphere we breathe, as well as the light that guides and cheers us, is faint, compared with that which is awarded to the man who steps forth to save his country, in cases of emergency or danger. The child, whose wants are anticipated by parental kindness, superseding the necessity of *asking*, is usually a cold-hearted, unthankful, undutiful child.

You cannot make common providential blessings produce the effects of special favors; nor do the cold results of general laws make the same impression as the kind care of a heavenly Father, who watches over us, and averts danger, and supplies our wants in answer to prayer.

Indeed, there would seem to be no possible way in which the intercourse of sinful subjects with their lawgiver and Saviour may be secured, so honorable to God, and so profitable and delightful to the sinner, as for him to feel his wants daily, and daily to receive, in connection with prayer, his supplies from the hand of God.

Finally, prayer is one of the most efficacious means of grace. Its tendencies are powerful to repress light-minded giddiness, to abate the delirium of pleasure, to silence the din of business, to alleviate the distractions of care, to inspire thoughtfulness, and awaken anxiety, fear, and that sense of sin which prepares the way for godly sorrow. The subject is withdrawn from all earthly scenes, to commune with his own heart, and with his God: his prejudices, his appetites,

and his passions sleep; the dreams of philosophy have fled; while he kneels before his Maker, and, under the inspection of his searching eye, makes confession of his sins, and spreads his wants before him, and usually is convinced of sin, and humbled and converted and sanctified through the instrumentality of prayer.

LECTURE XIV.

THE MEMORY OF OUR FATHERS.

And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

THE history of the world is the history of human nature in ruins. No state of society, which corresponds with the capacity of enjoyment possessed by man, or with his conceptions and desires, has been permanent and universal. Small portions only of the human family have, at the same time, enjoyed a state of society in any considerable degree desirable; while much the greatest part of mankind have, in all ages, endured the evils of barbarism and despotism.

It is equally manifest that this unhappy condition of our race has not been the result of physical necessity, but of moral causes. The earth is as capable of sustaining a happy as a miserable population; and it is the perversion of her resources, and of the human faculties, which has made the misery of man so great. The human intellect has given proof of vigor and ingenuity sufficient to bless the world; and powerful efforts have been made, in every age, by afflicted humanity, to surmount this downward bias, and rise to permanent enjoyment. Egypt, in her monumental ruins, affords evidence of a high state of the arts. In Greece, a vigorous intellect and favoring clime thrust up from the dead level around her a state of society comparatively cultivated and happy; but the sun of her prosperity blazed upon surround-

ing darkness, to set in a night of ages. Rome fought her way to dominion and civilization, and furnished specimens of mental vigor and finished culture; but the superstructure of her greatness was reared by the plunder of a devastated world. Commerce, which gave to cities a temporary eminence, elevated but little the moral condition of the multitude; and science, which was restored to modern Europe at the Reformation, and commerce and the arts, which have followed in her train, have not, to this day, disenthralled the nations.

From these experiments so long and so hopelessly made, it appears that, in the conflict between the heart and the intellect of man, victory has always declared on the side of the heart; which has led many to conclude that the condition of man, in respect to any universal abiding melioration, is hopeless. The Bible throws light upon this dark destiny of our race. A voice from heaven announces the approach of help from above. "He that sitteth upon the throne saith, Behold, I make all things new."

The renovation here announced is a moral renovation, which shall change the character and condition of men. It will not be partial in its influence, like the sun shining through clouds on favored spots; but coëxtensive with the ruin. Nor shall its results be national glory, which gilds only the palace, and cheers only the dwellings of the noble. It shall bring down the mountains, and exalt the valleys; it shall send liberty and equality to all the dwellings of men. Nor shall it stop at the fireside, or exhaust its blessings in temporal mercies; — it shall enter the hidden man of the heart, and there destroy the power which has blasted human hopes, and baffled human efforts. Nor will the change be transient; — it is the last dispensation of Heaven for the relief of this miser-

able world, and shall bring glory to God in the highest and upon earth peace, and good will to men.

Many have doubted whether such a renovation of the world will ever be accomplished; but He that sat upon the throne said, "It is done;"—that is, it is as certain as if it had come to pass.

I shall submit to your consideration, at this time, some of the reasons which justify the hope that our nation has been raised up by Providence to exert an efficient instrumentality in this work of moral renovation.

I observe, then, that, for the accomplishment of this renovation, great changes are required in the civil and religious condition of nations.

1. The monopoly of the soil must be abolished. Hitherto the majority of mankind who have tilled the earth have been slaves or tenants. The soil has been owned by kings, and military chieftains, and nobles; and by them rented to landlords, and by these to still smaller dealers; and by these again it has been divided and subdivided, until the majority, who paid the rent, have sustained, in the sweat of their brow, not only their own families, but three or four orders of society above them; while they themselves have been crushed beneath the weight, and have lived on the borders of starvation,—the sickness of a week, and often of a single day, rendering them paupers.

This same monopoly of the soil has sent another large class of the community into manufacturing establishments, to wear out their days in ignorance and hopeless poverty; and another to the camp and navy, where honor and wealth await the few, and ignorance and an early grave, the many.

The consequence of excluding such numbers from the possession and healthful cultivation of the soil has been ignorance,

improvidence, reckless indifference, turbulence, and crime. Tortured by their oppressions, and unrestrained by moral principle, they have been prepared for desperate deeds. Such a state of society cannot be made happy; the evil is radical, and can only be remedied by giving a new direction to the physical, moral, and intellectual energies of men. We might as well band with iron the trees of the forest, and expect their expansion, or throw upon them in stinted measure the light and the rain of heaven, and expect their luxuriant growth, as to cramp the human mind by unequal institutions, and expect the development of its resources, in a happy state of society. Room for action must be afforded, and light must be poured upon the understanding, and motive pressed upon the heart. Man must be unshackled, and stimulated. But, to accomplish this, *the earth must be owned by those who till it.* This will give action to industry, vigor to the body, and tone to the mind; and, by the attendant blessing of Heaven, religion to the heart. From agriculture, stimulated by personal rights, will result commerce, science, arts, liberty, and independence.

As the attraction of gravity is the great principle of motion in the material world, so the possession of the earth in fee simple by the cultivator is the great principle of action in the moral world. Nearly all the political evils which have afflicted mankind have resulted from the unrighteous monopoly of the earth; and the predicted renovation can never be accomplished, until, to some extent, this monopoly has passed away, and the earth is extensively tilled by the independent owners of the soil.

2. To effect the moral renovation of the world, a change is required in the prevailing forms of government.

The monopoly of power must be superseded by the suffrages

of freemen. While the great body of the people are excluded from all voice and influence in legislation, it is impossible to constitute a state of society such as the faculties of man allow, and the word of God predicts. While the few govern without responsibility, they will seek their own elevation, and depress the multitude. Power, without responsibility, has always developed a selfish disregard of human rights and happiness. To elevate society, and bring out the human energies in a well-ordered state of things, the mass of mankind must be enlightened, and qualified for self-government, and must yield obedience to delegated power; *for it is impossible for men to hire themselves wisely and safely governed, without knowledge and power in their own hands, which can create a feeling of responsibility in those who govern.*

3. Before the moral renovation of the world can be achieved, the rights of conscience must also be restored to man.

Few of the millions that have peopled the earth have been qualified by knowledge, or permitted by the governments under which they lived to read the Bible, and judge for themselves. The nominal religions of this world have either been supported by governments, which, of course, have prescribed the creed, and modelled the worship, and controlled the priesthood; or have been controlled and crushed by the despotic power of the government and priesthood united. From such a state of things, what better results could be expected, than that ambitious men should be exalted to the sacred office, while religion itself was despised and persecuted? Governments and ecclesiastics, then, must cease to dictate what men shall believe, and in what manner they shall worship God. The church must be emancipated from worldly dominion, and enjoy that liberty wherewith Jesus Christ has made her free.

But is it to be expected that kingly governments shall cease, and the republican form become universal? I shall not stop now to discuss this question. I would only suggest the inquiry, whether monarchical governments can be sustained without a nobility and an established religion; and whether these privileged orders can exist without that monopoly of the soil, and of political influence, and of the rights of conscience, which is destructive to a religious and happy state of society. That governments will change their name, or all their ancient forms, I will not say. But that they will, under some form, become so far popular in their spirit as that the political power shall be in the hands of the people, cannot be doubted.

It has been contended that Christianity cannot exist in this world without the aid of religious establishments. But, with more truth it might be said, that, from the beginning to this day, it has existed in spite of them. It took possession of the Roman empire in the face of a formidable establishment of false religion, and has survived the deadly embrace of establishments nominally Christian; and now, bursting from their alliance, finds in them the most bitter opposition to evangelical doctrine and vital godliness.

To accomplish these changes in the civil and religious condition of the world, revolutions and convulsions are doubtless indispensable. The usurpation of the soil will not be relinquished spontaneously, nor the chains be knocked off from the body and the mind of man by the hands which for ages have been employed to rivet them. He that sitteth upon the throne must overturn and overturn, before his rights and the rights of man will be restored. Revolutions, of course, are predicted, such as shall veil the sun, and turn the moon into blood, and shake the earth with the violence of nation dashing

upon nation; until every despotic government shall be thrown down; and chaos resume its pristine reign, until the Spirit of God shall move again upon the face of the dark deep, and bring out a new creation. This day of vengeance is no doubt begun, and will no doubt continue, until He that sitteth upon the throne shall have made all things new.

But, to the perfection of this work, a great example is required, of which the world may take knowledge, and which shall inspire hope, and rouse and concentrate the energies of man. But where should such an experiment be made? Africa requires for herself the commiseration of the world; and in Europe and Asia it would require ages to dig up the foundations of despotism, and remove the rubbish, to prepare the way for such a state of society as we have described: this, too, will have been done in opposition to proscription and organized resistance. There is also such a mass of uninformed mind, accustomed to crouch under burdens, and so much is required to prepare it for civil liberty, that little hope remains that the old world, undirected and unstimulated by example, will ever disinthrall itself. Some nation, itself free, is needed, to blow the trumpet and hold up the light. But in England, though she enjoys to a great extent the blessings of civil liberty, there is so great a monopoly of the soil and of power, and so much overturning is feared and needed, that it is only in stinted measures, and with circumspect policy, that she can deal out her sympathy, and hold up her light. A more vigorous ally to liberty is needed, which should, with a fearless heart and powerful hand, push on the work. But where could such a nation be found? It must have been created, for it had no existence upon the earth three hundred years ago. Look now at the history of our fathers, and behold what God hath wrought. They

were such a race of men as never before laid the foundations of an empire,—athletic, intelligent, and pious. But how should this portion of a nation's population be uprooted, and driven into exile? They were not permitted to remain at home. In that age of darkness and land of bondage, they had formed some just conceptions of civil and religious liberty, and would fain have modified the civil government and the church of God according to the Gospel. But the reformation from popery, superintended by government, and regulated by policy, stopped short of what the pious expected and desired. The Puritans could not in all things conform, and were not permitted to dissent; and thus they were driven into exile, and compelled to lay the foundations of a new empire. And now, behold their institutions; such as the world needs, and, attended as they have been by the power of God, able to enlighten and renovate the world. They recognize the equal rights of man; they give the soil to the cultivator, and self-government and the rights of conscience to the people. They enlighten the intellect, and form the conscience, and bring the entire influence of the divine government to bear upon the heart. It was the great object of our fathers to govern men by the fear of the Lord; to exhibit the precepts, apply the motives, and realize the dispositions, which the word of God inculcates and his spirit inspires; to imbue families, and schools, and towns, and states, with the wisdom from above. They had no projects of human device, no theories of untried efficacy. They hung all their hopes of civil and religious prosperity upon the word of God, and the efficiency of his Spirit. Nor was theirs the presumptuous hope of grace without works. It was by training men for self-government, that they expected to make men free; and, by becoming fellow-workers with God, that they expected his aid in the production of

character; while, by intellectual culture, and moral influence, and divine power, they prepared men to enjoy and perpetuate civil liberty.

The law, with sleepless vigilance, watched over the family, the church, and the state; and a vigorous and united public opinion rendered its execution certain and efficacious. Every family was required to possess a Bible, every district a school, and every town a pastor. The law protected the Sabbath, and sustained the public worship of God, and punished immorality; and, with mild but effectual energy, ruled over all. The great excellence of these institutions is, that they are practical and powerful; the people are not free in name and form merely, but in deed and in truth. Were all these forms blotted out this day, the people would still be free, and other forms of civil freedom would arise. The governments are free governments, from the foundation to the top-stone, and of such practical efficacy as to make *free men.* The family, embodying instruction and government, was itself an embryo empire. In the school district, the people were called upon to exercise their own discretion and rights; and in the ecclesiastical society, to rear their place of worship, elect their pastor, and provide for his support; and all under the protection of law. The towns, in their popular assemblies, discussed their local interests, and administered their own concerns. In these originated the legislature, and from the legislature emanated the courts of justice. In the States, as they are now organized in a nation, all which is local and peculiar is superintended with a minuteness and efficacy which no consolidated government could possibly accomplish. The people have only to ascertain from experience what their convenience or interest demands, and their wish becomes a law; and still, in the national government, there is all the comprehension of plan,

and power of resource, and unity of action, which are required for the highest degree of national energy and prosperity.

It has been doubted whether a republic so extensive as ours can be held together and efficiently governed. But where State organizations remain, and intellectual and moral influence is maintained, and the habitual exercise of civil and religious liberty from the family upward, we see not why a republic may not be extended indefinitely, and still be the strongest and most effective government in the world.

The origin and history of our nation are indicative of some great design to be accomplished by it. It is a history of perils and deliverances, and of strength ordained out of weakness. The wars with the savage tribes, and with the French, and at last with the English, protracted expense and toil and blood through a period of one hundred and fifty years. No nation, out of such weakness, ever became so strong, or was guided through such perils to such safety. "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say,— if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul; then the proud waters had gone over our soul." These deliverances the enemy beheld with wonder, and our fathers with thanksgiving and praise. But, in the whole history of the world, God has not been accustomed to grant signal interpositions, without ends of corresponding magnitude to be answered by them. Indeed, if it had been the design of Heaven to establish a powerful nation, in the full enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, where all the energies of man might find scope and excitement, on purpose to show the world, by one great successful experiment, of what man is

capable, and to shed light on the darkness, which should awake the slumbering eye, and rouse the torpid mind, and nerve the palsied arm of millions,— where could such an experiment have been made but in this country, and by whom so auspiciously as by our fathers, and by what means so well adapted to that end as by their institutions? The course which is now adopted by Christians of all denominations, to support and extend, at home and abroad, religious and moral influence, would seem to indicate the purpose of God to render this nation extensively the almoner of his mercy to the world.

For two hundred years, the religious institutions of our land were secured by law. But, as our numbers increased, and liberty of conscience resulted in many denominations of Christians, it became impossible to secure by law the universal application of religious and moral influence. And yet, without this mighty energy, the whole system must fail; for physical power, without religious and moral influence, will not avail to sustain the institutions of civil liberty. We might as well rely on the harvests which our fathers reared, for bread, as to rely on the external forms of liberty which they established, without the application of that vital energy by which the body politic was animated and moved. But, at the very time when the civil law had become impotent for the support of religion and the prevention of immoralities, God began to pour out his Spirit upon the churches; and voluntary associations of Christians were raised up, to apply and extend that influence which the law could no longer apply. And now we are blessed with societies to aid in the support of the Gospel at home, to extend it to the new settlements, and through the earth. We have Bible societies, and tract societies, and associations of individuals who make it their business to see

that every family has a Bible, and every church a pastor, and every child a catechism. And to these have succeeded education societies, that our nation may not outgrow the means of religious instruction. And while these means of moral culture are supplied, this great nation, from her eminence, begins to look abroad with compassion upon a world sitting in darkness, and to put forth her mighty arm to disinthrall the nations, and elevate the family of man. Let it be remembered, also, that the means now relied on are precisely those which our fathers applied, and which have secured our prosperity. And when we contemplate the unexampled resources of this country, in men, soil, climate, sea-coast, rivers, lakes, canals, agriculture, commerce, arts, and wealth, — and all in connection with the influence of republican and religious institutions, — is it too much to be hoped, that God will accept our powerful instrumentality, and make it effectual for the renovation of the world?

The revivals of religion which have prevailed in our land, among Christians of all denominations, furnish cheering evidence of the presence of evangelical doctrine, and of the power of that Spirit by which the truth is made effectual in the salvation of men. These revivals are distinguished by their continuance through a period of fifty years; by their extent, — pervading the nation; by their increasing frequency in the same places; by their rapidity and power, — often changing, in a few weeks, the character of towns and cities, and even of large districts of country, — an earnest of that glorious time when a nation shall be born in a day. They purify our literary institutions, and multiply pastors and missionaries, to cheer our own land, and enlighten distant nations. They are without a parallel in the history of the world, and are constituting an era of moral power entirely new. Already

the churches look chiefly to them for their members and pastors, and for that power upon public opinion which retards declension, and gives energy to law, and voluntary support to religious institutions.

These revivals, then, falling in with all these antecedent indications, seem to declare the purpose of God to give a prominent place to this nation in the glorious work of renovating the earth.

If we look at our missionaries abroad, and witness the smiles of Heaven upon their efforts, our confidence that it is the purpose of God to render our nation a blessing to the world will be increased. In talents, and piety, and learning, and doctrine, and civil policy, they are the legitimate descendants of the Puritans. Everywhere they command high respect, and have been distinguished by their judicious and successful efforts. In Ceylon, and the Sandwich Islands, and among the fallen and formal and papal churches of Asia and Europe, and the natives of our own land, they are fast supplanting idolatry and forms by Christian churches. Revivals of religion cheer and bless them; churches, and all the elements of Christian civilization, are multiplying around them.

Let this nation go on, then, and multiply its millions and its resources, and bring the whole under the influence of our civil and religious institutions, and, with the energies of its concentrated benevolence, send out evangelical instruction,—and who can calculate what our blessed instrumentality shall have accomplished, when He who sitteth upon the throne shall have made all things new?

If Swartz, and Buchanan, and Vanderkemp, and Carey, and Martyn, and Brainerd, could, each alone, accomplish so much, what may not be expected from the energies of such a

nation as this, consecrated to such a work? Fifty such men as Paul the Apostle, unaided by the resources of systematic benevolence, might evangelize the world. What, then, may not be accomplished by a nation of freemen, destined in little more than half a century to number its fifty millions?

If we consider, also, our friendly relations with the South American states, and the close imitation they are disposed to make of our civil and literary institutions, who can doubt that the spark which our forefathers struck will yet enlighten this entire continent? But when the light of such a hemisphere shall go up to heaven, it will throw its beams beyond the waves; it will shine into the darkness there, and be comprehended,—it will awaken desire, and hope, and effort, and produce revolutions and overturnings, until the world is free.

From our revolutionary struggle proceeded the revolution in France, and the overturnings and overturnings which have followed in the nations of Europe; and though the bolt of every chain has been again driven, they can no more hold the heaving mass, than the chains of Xerxes could hold the Hellespont vexed with storms. Floods have been poured upon the rising flame, but they can no more extinguish it than they can extinguish the fires of Ætna. Still it burns, and still the mountain heaves and murmurs; and soon it will explode, with voices, and thunderings, and great earthquakes. And then will the trumpet of jubilee sound, and earth's debased millions will leap from the dust, and shake off their chains, and cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Before we conclude this lecture, let us attend to some of the duties to which we are called by our high providential destiny.

And most evidently we are called upon —

1. To cherish with high veneration and grateful recollec-

tions the memory of our fathers. Both the ties of nature and the dictates of policy demand this. And surely no nation ever had less occasion to be ashamed of its ancestry, or more occasion for gratulation in that respect; for, while most nations trace their origin to barbarians, the foundations of our nation were laid by civilized men,—by Christians; many of them men of distinguished families, powerful talents, great learning, preëminent wisdom, decision of character, and inflexible integrity. And yet, not unfrequently, they have been treated as if they had no virtues, while their sins and follies have been sedulously immortalized in satirical anecdote. The influence of such treatment of our fathers is too manifest. It creates and lets loose upon their invaluable institutions the Vandal spirit of innovation and overthrow; for, after the memory of our fathers shall have been rendered contemptible, eulogies over their fallen greatness will have little power to perpetuate their institutions. "THE MEMORY OF OUR FATHERS" should be the watchword of liberty throughout the land; for, imperfect as they were, the world before had not seen their like, nor will it soon, we fear, behold their like again. Such models of moral excellence, such apostles of civil and religious liberty, such shades of the illustrious dead, looking down upon their descendants with approbation or reproof, according as they follow, or depart from, the good way, constitute a censorship inferior only to the eye of God; and to ridicule them is national suicide.

The doctrines of our fathers have been represented as gloomy, superstitious, severe, irrational, and of a licentious tendency. But when other systems shall have produced a piety as devoted, a morality as pure, a patriotism as disinterested, and a state of society as happy, as have prevailed where their doctrines have been most prevalent, it may be in

season to seek an answer to this objection. The same doctrines have been charged with inspiring a spirit of dogmatism, and religious domination. But, in the struggles of man with despotic power for civil liberty, the doctrines of our fathers have been found usually, if not always, on the side of liberty, as their opposites have been usually found in the ranks of arbitrary power.

The persecutions instituted by our fathers have been the occasion of ceaseless obloquy upon their fair fame. And truly it was a fault of no ordinary magnitude, that sometimes they did persecute. But let him whose ancestors were not ten times more guilty cast the first stone, and the ashes of our fathers will no more be disturbed. Theirs was the fault of the age, from which they had not wholly escaped; but it will be easy to show that no class of men had, at that time, approximated so nearly to just apprehensions of religious liberty, and that it is to them that the world is now indebted for the more just and definite views which prevail. More exclamation and invective has been called forth by the few instances of persecution by the fathers of New England, than by the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and all the fires which lighted the realm of old England for centuries, and drove into exile thousands of her most valuable subjects.

The superstition and bigotry of our fathers are themes on which some of their descendants, themselves far enough from superstition, if not from bigotry, have delighted to dwell. But, when we look abroad, and behold the condition of the world compared with the condition of New England, we may justly exclaim, "Would to God that the ancestors of all the nations had been not only almost, but altogether, such bigots as our fathers were!"

Their strictness in the family, and in church and state, has

been complained of, as too rigid. But they were laying the foundations of a nation, and applying a moral power whose impulse should extend through ages; and who, that beholds the rapid and appalling moral relaxation of the present day, can believe that they put the system in motion with too much vigor? In proportion as their discipline had been less strict, our present condition had been more alarming, and our future prospects more desperate.

Our fathers have been ridiculed as an uncouth and uncourtly generation. And it must be admitted that they were not as expert in the graces of dress, and the etiquette of the drawing-room, as some of their descendants. But neither could these have felled the trees, nor guided the plough, nor spread the sail, which they did; nor braved the dangers of Indian warfare; nor displayed the wisdom in counsel which our fathers displayed. And, had none stepped upon the Plymouth rock but such effeminate critics as these, the poor natives never would have mourned their wilderness lost, but would have brushed them from the land as they would brush the puny insect from their face; the Pequods would have slept in safety that night which was their last, and no intrepid MASON had hung upon their rear, and driven into exile the panic-struck fugitives.

2. We are called upon to cherish and extend our religious institutions.

Religion was the power on which our fathers relied, the power which has made us what we are, and which must guarantee the perpetuity of our blessings. Every other influence has been tried and has failed, while this has been tried with ample promise of success. The application of religious and moral influence is, therefore, the great duty to which, as a nation, we are called. On this influence depends

our rise or fall — our glorious immortality or our hasty dissolution. Everything but this may be safely left to the operation of existing causes. Ambition will secure the interests of education and science; the love of gain will push agriculture and commerce and arts; and the pride of liberty will arm the nation, and render it invincible. All these things the nations who have preceded us have been able to do. But there is a sickness of the heart which they could neither endure nor heal; and with this same disease this nation is sick; and intellectual culture, and civil liberty, and national wealth, will not heal it. There is but one remedy, and that is the preaching of the Gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from on high. But, to render the Gospel effectual, the religious education of the family, and the moral culture of our schools and colleges, must be secured; and the Sabbath must be rescued from profanation. The Sabbath is the great organ of the divine administration — the only means provided by God to give ubiquity and power to his moral government. The intellectual culture of a nation requires schools and literary institutions; and that the subjects of instruction shall be brought under their influence. But let the fascinations of pleasure, or the demands of labor, withdraw the children and youth from the power of intellectual culture, and ignorance will ensue. In like manner, let the stream of pleasure and of worldly cares bear away the population of the land from the house of God, and roll over the Sabbath; and ignorance of God and of his laws will, with equal certainty, ensue: irreligion will prevail, and immorality and dissoluteness, to an extent utterly inconsistent with the permanence of republican institutions. Europe can never enjoy civil liberty until she shall do more homage to the Sabbath of God; and we shall enjoy it but a short space after we have ceased to render to God his

rights in that sacred day; for all the millions who violate the Sabbath withdraw themselves from the moral power of the divine government, deprive their families of a religious education, and abandon them to the power of their evil hearts, and their own bad example. In the mean time, the secular interests of men are so indissolubly connected, that the stream of business, put in motion by the wicked on the Sabbath day, not only pains the eye of the virtuous, but, as it deepens, and roars, and rolls onward its turbid waters, it draws into itself, by the associations of business, a large and still larger portion of the community; until it spreads unresisted over the land, obliterates the government of God, and substitutes covetousness, and pleasure, and dissoluteness, instead of godliness, and the morality of the Gospel.

The present, undoubtedly, is the generation which is to decide the fate of this great empire, by deciding whether the Sabbath of God shall be preserved or blotted out; for the temptations of the seaboard and of canals are immense, and are increasing most fearfully; and, unless public sentiment and law shall make a stand soon, we may as well attempt to stop the rolling of the ocean, or the current of our mighty rivers. There is, evidently, now a cheering moral convalescence on this subject, demanding gratitude, and hope, and effort.

The universal extension of our religious institutions is the only means of reconciling our unparalleled prosperity with national purity and immortality. Without the preserving power of religious and moral influence, our rapid increase in wealth will be the occasion of our swift destruction. The rank vegetation of unsanctified enterprise, thrown into one vast reservoir of putrefaction, will send up over the land desolation and death. No nation will be so short-lived as ours,

unless we can balance the temptations of our prosperity by moral power. Our sun has moved onward from his morning to his meridian with a rapidity and glory which has amazed the world. But, unless we can extend the power of religious institutions through the land, dark clouds will soon obscure his glory, and his descent to a night of ages will be more rapid than his rising.

When we were colonies, or unallied states, the law could make provision for the creation and application of moral power. The law could compel men to desist from secular employments and vain amusements on the Sabbath. The law could compel men to support the Gospel, and attend the public worship of God; and civil officers could see to it that every town should in due time settle a minister, and that every family should possess a Bible and a catechism. But these means of moral influence the law can no longer apply; and there is no substitute but the voluntary energies of the nation itself, exerted by associations for charitable contributions and efforts, patronized by all denominations of Christians, and by all classes of the community who love their country. We may boast of our civil and religious liberty; but they are the fruit of other men's labors into which we have entered, and the effect of institutions whose impulse has been felt long after the hands that reared and launched them have mouldered in the grave. This impulse, too, is fast failing, and becoming yearly more and more disproportioned to the mass that is to be moved by it. Our religious institutions must be invigorated, or we are undone. They must move onward with our flowing emigration to the Mississippi, must pass the Rocky Mountains, and pour their waters of life into the ocean beyond; and from the north to the south they must bear salvation on their waves. Much of this religious enterprise has

already scaled the iron mountains, and reached the Pacific, and is energetically engaged in rearing in that nation "born in a day" Christian influence, a light to themselves, and a light to the Gentiles still further west—the millions of China. In this way the nation can save itself; but, unless it can be thoroughly roused to this mighty work, it will, like the man among the tombs, become exceeding fierce, and turn upon itself its infuriated energies, and pour out its own life-blood by self-inflicted wounds.*

3. We are called upon to give a quickened and extended impulse to our charitable institutions.

These are the providential substitutes for those legal provisions of our fathers, which are now inapplicable by change of circumstances. In these the people of our nation must enrol themselves spontaneously, and the spirit of the Puritans be

* In many of the discourses and orations which commemorate the deeds of our fathers, their character, as the apostles of civil liberty, is especially eulogized; while their doctrine, their piety, their church order, and the other peculiarities of their religious institutions, are passed off with cold commendations, or perhaps palliated and excused as the defects of the age. But no historical fact is more completely established, than that religion was the chief end for which our fathers sought this wilderness; and that their peculiar doctrines, and views of experimental religion and church order, were dearer to them than life; and that it is these which, for more than one hundred and fifty years, comprehended the religious and moral influence under which New England was formed, and which has made her what she is. Let the children of the Pilgrims never forget this; and let the eulogists of their patriotism cease to spread before our eyes such a glitter of style and eloquence as shall place their civil exploits in the foreground, and throw their doctrines, and church order, and eminent piety, into the back-ground. The religious and moral causes which have blessed New England, and are now rolling the tide of salvation to the west, can never be concealed, and can never be successfully misrepresented. As well may the Newtonian philosophy be concealed, as the system of our fathers; it is out, and known and read of all men.

revived, for the preservation of their institutions. And now is the time. With our growing prosperity, the fascinations of pleasure increase, and the means and temptations to voluptuousness. Now, unless the salt of the earth contained in Christian institutions can be diffused through the land, the mass will putrefy. The tide of business and pleasure, bursting from our cities, and rolling on our sea-coast, and flowing in our canals, will soon sweep away the Sabbath, unless a vigorous public sentiment, by the preaching of the Gospel, and the power of the Spirit, can be arrayed for its preservation. Let the Sabbath-schools, then, and Bible-classes of our land, be multiplied; and let societies for domestic missions rise in every state and district, and collect and pour out the energies of the nation for its moral preservation; while Bibles, and pastors, and teachers, are multiplied, till the knowledge of the Lord covers the land, and his saving health is extended to all the people.

4. All Christian denominations are called upon to coöperate for the preservation of religion.

It is idle to expect, and folly to desire, the amalgamation of all denominations into one. The papal effort at universal comprehension has shown what a vast, unstimulated, stagnant uniformity will accomplish; and God, no doubt, has permitted some varying winds of opinion to move upon the face of our deep, to maintain motion, purity, and life. We may say, however, that jealousies and ambitious collisions between religious denominations should give place to Christian courtesy, and the magnanimity of a hearty coöperation for the glory of God, and the salvation of the world. It is in vain to expect, and it would be sinful to desire, the extinction of any one denomination of real Christians. There is room for all, and work for all; and there is ample reason why each

should hail the other as an auxiliary in the work of the Lord. Religious principle must be applied throughout the nation, and no *one* denomination *can* do it. The work demands the ceaseless action of each in its own peculiar way, and the magnanimous coöperation of all, for the preservation of the great principles of our common Christianity. Nor will such concert of action be in vain. It will form, extensively, a public opinion which shall accord with the morality of the Gospel; whose sanctions, expressed in the votes of virtuous freemen, shall elevate to influence and power men of pure morality, and consign the irreligious, immoral, and dissolute, to merited contempt; — a law which the wicked cannot repeal, and whose penalty they cannot evade. All denominations united, and directing their suffrages to that end, can check the violation of the Sabbath; can arrest the contagion of intemperance; can punish duellists in high places, who, with shameless notoriety, set at defiance the laws of God and their country, bringing upon us the contempt of the world, and the just judgments of Heaven.

5. In this great work of national preservation and universal good will, our civil rulers are particularly called upon to coöperate; not, as once, in convoking synods, and approving and recommending creeds; and not in coërcing by law attendance upon public worship, or the support of religious institutions. The day is gone by in which such interposition is required, or can avail. The God of our fathers, having given to us a practical illustration of the efficacy of religious institutions, sustained by law during our minority, now, in our manhood, puts the price into our hands, to be preserved or abandoned spontaneously on our own responsibility. Nor are the church and the state to be so identified as that the qualifications for civil office must be the same as for membership

in that kingdom which is not of this world. Our civil rulers owe to God and their country, now, the same illustrious piety, the same estimation of the doctrines of God's Word, the same attendance upon the ordinances of the Gospel, and coöperation for their support, and the same strict and pure morality, which rendered the civil fathers of our land so illustrious in their character, and so benign in the power of their example upon their own and upon other generations. The example of men in official stations is the most powerful moral cause which afflicts or blesses a community. If it be good, it descends with cheering power, like the gentle rain upon the earth; but if it be evil, from its "bad eminence" it comes down upon the community like the mountain torrent, sweeping away landmarks: under the sway of bad rulers, the righteous mourn, and the wicked creep from their hiding-places, and walk on every side, setting their mouth against the heavens, and their foot upon all that is sacred and holy. The time has come when the experiment is to be made, whether the world is to be emancipated and rendered happy, or whether the whole creation shall groan and travail on together in pain, until the final consummation; and the example of the rulers of our nation will throw decisive weights into the scales, for or against the world's last hope. If they pour contempt upon the Bible, its doctrines and institutions — if they take in vain the name of God, or profane wantonly his holy day — if they concentrate in the capitol, and spread abroad through the land the infection of their bad example,— the whole nation will feel it, and die under it, unless the indignant virtue of an insulted community shall throw off the body of death, and, by a well-directed suffrage, call to its aid men of talents and of pure morality.

6. To perpetuate our national prosperity, and hold up our

light to the world, our citizens must banish party spirit, and regulate the suffrage of the nation with reference to the preservation of its moral purity.

The temporary collisions of local interest and of ambition can never be excluded from such a nation as this, and are not to be feared. It is those deep-rooted and permanent divisions, extending through the land, rousing the feelings and arraying the energies of one part of the nation in keen collision with the other, and perpetuating prejudice and strife from generation to generation, which threaten the existence of our republican institutions. Through one such fiery trial we have passed undestroyed, though by no means uninjured; and no patriot of the present generation would willingly, I trust, behold our country placed in such jeopardy again. Despotic governments may pass in safety through popular commotions, such as would shake down the pillars of a republic. The mobs of England, which, in the presence of the military power, are but the gambols of a kid within the scope of the lion's paw, would be, in this country, as the letting out of waters. There is no possibility of freedom, in this bad world, without so much intelligence and moral principle among the people as shall create an efficient public sentiment in favor of law and good order. But party spirit prostrates everything within the sphere of its commotion which is venerable and sacred. It directs the attention of the people from their own common interests to the means of gaining objects to which prejudice and passion may direct them; and the attention of the government from the public good to the means of its own perpetuity and ascendency. It renders a wise and comprehensive policy impossible; for party spirit has no magnanimity, no conscience, no consistency, to withhold it from resisting as readily what is wise as what is unwise; and its victories

are too transient to admit of much prospective wisdom. It is eminently hostile to the laws which watch over the morals of the nation; — for who will execute them, when partisans on both sides fear that they may feel the consequences of fidelity at the next election? Too often, from the nearly balanced state of parties, the most worthless portion of the community actually hold the sway in the elections, even in a state of society comparatively virtuous, occasioning impunity in the violation of law, and clothing with political consequence, and too often surrounding with adulation, men whom our fathers would have expelled from good society. It tends to destroy in society all distinctions of moral character, talent, and learning, as qualifications for office; while it reconciles the people, upon the plea of necessity, to such preposterous sacrifices of conscience and common sense, as they would never consent to, unstimulated by its madness. Indeed, in all but the name, it rears, beneath the forms of freedom, a real and most terrific despotism. For every party has a soul, some master-spirit, who, without a crown and a sceptre, governs with absolute sway. He is surrounded by a nobility, each of whom is commissioned to govern the public opinion within his sphere, and bring his retainers to the polls, to subserve implicitly the interests of the king and of the aristocracy. It needs only to kindle the watch-fire, and every clansman is at his post; and argument might as well avail against bullets in the day of battle, as against party spirit in these determined contests. There is no remedy for this state of things, but that intelligence which qualifies the people to understand their rights, interests, and duties; and that calmness of feeling to which the public mind, undisturbed by partisan efforts, will not fail to come; and that deep conviction of the importance of moral purity, which shall turn the expectations of the people from

party men and party measures, to the application of moral power, by the institutions of religion, and the interposition of the Holy Spirit.

Multitudes of Christians and patriots have long since abandoned party politics, and, not knowing what to do, have almost abandoned the exercise of suffrage. This is wrong. An enlightened and virtuous suffrage may, by system and concentration, become one of the most powerful means of promoting national purity and morality; as the suffrage from which the influence of conscience is withdrawn cannot fail to be disastrous. While, then, as freemen, we remove one temptation to hypocrisy, by dispensing with a profession of religion as a qualification for office, and exclude all occasions of jealousy, by bestowing our votes without reference to Christian denomination, let all Christians and all patriots exercise their rights as electors with an inflexible regard to moral character.; and let the duellist, and the Sabbath-breaker, and the drunkard, and the licentious, find the doors of honor barred, and the heights of ambition defended against them by hosts of determined freemen; and the moral effect will be great. The discrimination by suffrage will exert upon the youth of our country a most salutary restraint, and upon dissolute and ambitious men a powerful reforming influence. Let every freeman, then, who would perpetuate the liberty and happiness of his country, and transmit to his descendants of distant generations the precious legacy which our fathers have sent down to us, inquire concerning the candidate for whom he is solicited to vote, — Is he an enemy to the Bible, or to the doctrines and institutions of the Gospel? is he a duellist, or an intemperate man, or a Sabbath-breaker, or dissolute, or dishonest? — and if, in any of these respects, he be disqualified, let him withhold his vote, and give it to a better man;

and it will go far to retrieve the declensions which have taken place, and to render righteousness and peace the stability of our times.

And now, what shall we say to these things? Are they the dreams of a fervid imagination, or are they the words of truth and soberness? Will our blessings be perpetuated, or shall ours be added to the ruined republics that have been? Are we assembled to-day to bestow funeral honors upon our departed glory, or with united counsels and hearts to strengthen the things that remain? Weak, indeed, must be the faith that wavers now, and sinks amid waves less terrific, and prospects more cheering, than any which our fathers ever saw. Were it dark even as midnight, and did the waves run high, and dash loud and angry around us, still our faith would not be dismayed; still, with our fathers, we would believe, "*Qui transtulit sustinet;*" and still would we rejoice in the annunciation of Him that sitteth upon the throne, "Behold, I create all things new." Our anchor will not fail, our bark will not founder; for the means of preservation *will* be used, and the God of our fathers *will* make them effectual. The memory of our fathers is becoming more precious. Their institutions are commanding a higher estimation. Deeper convictions are felt of the importance of religion; and more extended and vigorous exertions are made to balance the temptations of prosperity by moral power. Christians are comparatively ceasing from their jealousies, and concentrating their energies. The nation is moved, and beginning to enrol itself in various forms of charitable association, for the extension of religion at home and abroad. Philosophers and patriots, statesmen and men of wealth, are beginning to feel that it is righteousness only which exalteth a nation; and to give to the work of moral renovation their arguments, the power of their example,

and the impulse of their charity. And the people, weary of political collision, are disposed at length to build again those institutions, which, in times of contention, they had either neglected or trodden down. Such an array of moral influence as is now comprehended in the great plan of charitable operations was never before brought to bear upon any nation. It moves onward, attended by fervent supplications, and followed by glorious and unceasing effusions of the Holy Spirit. The god of this world feels the shock of the onset, and has commenced his retreat; and Jesus Christ is pressing onward from conquering to conquer; nor will he turn from his purpose, or cease from his work, until he hath made all things new!

LECTURES ON INTEMPERANCE.

LECTURE I.*

NATURE AND OCCASIONS OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

"They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thy heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." PROVERBS 23: 29—35.

THIS is a glowing description of the sin of intemperance. No pencil but that of inspiration could have thrown upon the canvas so many and such vivid traits of this complicated evil, in so short a compass. It exhibits its woes and sorrows, contentions and babblings, and wounds and redness of eyes; its smiling deceptions in the beginning, and serpent-bite in the end; the helplessness of its victims, like one cast out upon the deep; the danger of destruction, like that of one who

* When the following discourses were written, alcohol, in the form of ardent spirits, so called at that day, was the most common intoxicating beverage in use. But as the poison in every form is the same, and the effect the same, the argument against this form applies alike to every form. I have, therefore, made no change in the language.

sleeps upon the top of a mast; the unavailing lamentations of the captive, and the giving up of hope and effort. "They have stricken me, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again,"—again be stricken and beaten, again float upon the deep, and sleep upon the mast.

No sin has fewer apologies than intemperance. The suffrage of the world is against it; and yet there is no sin so naked in its character, and whose commencement and progress is indicated by so many signs, concerning which there is among mankind such profound ignorance. All reprobate drunkenness; and yet, not one of the thousands who fall into it dreams of danger when he enters the way that leads to it.

The soldier approaching the deadly breach, and seeing rank after rank of those who preceded him swept away, hesitates sometimes, and recoils from certain death. But men behold the effects upon others of going in given courses,—they see them begin, advance, and end in confirmed intemperance,—and unappalled rush heedlessly upon the same ruin.

A part of this heedlessness arises from the undefined nature of the crime in its early stages, and the ignorance of men concerning what may be termed the experimental indications of its approach. Theft and falsehood are definite actions. But the first effect of intemperance is a state of internal sensation, and the indications may exist long, and multiply, and the subject of them not be aware that they are the signs of intemperance. It is not unfrequent that men become irreclaimable in their habits, without suspicion of danger. Nothing, therefore, seems to be more important than a description of this broad way, thronged by so many travellers; that the temperate, when they come in sight of it, may know their danger, and pass by it and turn away.

What I shall deliver on this subject has been projected for several years, has been delayed by indisposition and the pressure of other labors, and is advanced now without personal or local reference.

Intemperance is the sin of our land, and, with our boundless prosperity, is coming in upon us like a flood; and if anything shall defeat the hopes of the world, which hang upon our experiment of civil liberty, it is that river of fire which is rolling through the land, destroying the vital air, and extending around an atmosphere of death.

It is proposed, in this and the subsequent discourses, to consider the nature, the occasions, the signs, the evils, and the remedy of intemperance. In this discourse, we shall consider THE NATURE AND OCCASIONS OF INTEMPERANCE.

The more common apprehension is, that nothing is intemperance which does not prevent the regular operation of the mental faculties and the bodily organs. However much a man may consume of ardent spirits, if he can command his mind, his utterance, and his bodily members, he is not reputed intemperate. And yet, drinking within these limits, he may be intemperate in respect to inordinate desire, the quantity consumed, the expense incurred, the present effect on his health and temper and moral sensibilities, and, what is more, in respect to the ultimate and inevitable results of bodily and mental imbecility, or sottish drunkenness.

God has made the human body to be sustained by food and sleep, and the mind to be invigorated by effort, and the regular healthfulness of the moral system, and the cheering influence of his moral government. And whoever, to sustain the body, or invigorate the mind, or cheer the heart, applies habitually the stimulus of ardent spirits, does violence to the laws of his nature puts the whole system into disorder, and

is intemperate long before the intellect falters, or a muscle is unstrung.

The effect of ardent spirits on the brain and the members of the body is among the least effects of intemperance, and the least destructive part of the sin. It is the moral ruin which it works in the soul, that gives it the denomination of giant wickedness. If all who are intemperate drank to insensibility, and, on awaking, could arise from the debauch with intellect and heart uninjured, it would strip the crime of its most appalling evils. But among the woes which the Scriptures denounce against crime, one is, "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to consume strong drink." These are captains in the bands of intemperance, and will drink two generations of youths into the grave, before they go to lie down by their side. The Lord deliver us from strong-headed men, who can move the tongue when all are mute around them, and keep the eye open when all around them sleep, and can walk from the scene of riot, while their companions must be aided, or wait until the morning.

It is a matter of undoubted certainty, that habitual tippling is worse than periodical drunkenness. The poor Indian, who, once a month, drinks himself *dead* all but simple breathing, will outlive, for years, the man who drinks little and often, and is not, perhaps, suspected of intemperance. The use of ardent spirits daily, as ministering to cheerfulness or bodily vigor, ought to be regarded as intemperance. No person probably ever did, or ever will, receive ardent spirits into his system once a day, and fortify his constitution against its deleterious effects, or exercise such discretion and self-government, as that the quantity will not be increased, and bodily infirmities and mental imbecility be the result, and, in more than half the instances, inebriation. Nature may hold out

long against this sapping and mining of the constitution which daily tippling is carrying on; but, first or last, this foe of life will bring to the assault enemies of its own formation, before whose power the feeble and the mighty will be alike unable to stand.

All such occasional exhilaration of the spirits by intoxicating liquors as produces levity, and foolish jesting, and the loud laugh, is intemperance, whether we regard those precepts which require us to be sober-minded, or the effect which such exhilaration and lightness have upon the cause of Christ, when witnessed in professors of religion. The cheerfulness of health, and the excitement of industry and social intercourse, is all which nature demands, or health or purity permits.

A resort to ardent spirits as a means of invigorating the intellect, or of pleasurable sensation, is also intemperance. It is a distraint upon nature, to extort, in a short time, those results of mind and feeling which, in her own unimpelled course, would flow with less impetuosity, but in a more equable and healthful current. The mind has its limits of intellectual application, and the heart its limits of feeling, and the nervous system of healthful exhilaration; and whatever you gain through stimulus, by way of anticipation, is only so much intellectual and vital power cut off at the latter end of life. It is this occult intemperance, of daily drinking, which generates a host of bodily infirmities and diseases: loss of appetite, nausea at the stomach, disordered bile, obstructions of the liver, jaundice, dropsy, hoarseness of voice, coughs, consumption, rheumatic pains, epilepsy, gout, colic, palsy, apoplexy, insanity, are the body-guards which attend intemperance in the form of tippling, and where the odious name of drunkenness may perhaps be never applied.

A multitude of persons who are not accounted drunkards

create disease and shorten their days by what they denominate a "prudent use of ardent spirits." Let it, therefore, be engraven upon the heart of every man, THAT THE DAILY USE OF ARDENT SPIRITS, IN ANY FORM OR IN ANY DEGREE, IS INTEMPERANCE. Its effects are certain and deeply injurious, though its results may be slow, and never be ascribed to the real cause. It is a war upon the human constitution, carried on ostensibly by an auxiliary, but which never fails to subtract more vital power than it imparts. Like the letting out of waters, by little and little, it widens the breach, till life itself is poured out. If all diseases which terminate in death could speak out at the grave, or tell their origin upon the coffin-lid, we should witness the most appalling and unexpected disclosures. Happy the man who so avoids the appearance of evil as not to shorten his days by what he may call the prudent use of ardent spirits.

But we approach now a state of experience in which it is supposed generally that there is some criminal intemperance. I mean when the empire of reason is invaded, and weakness and folly bear rule; prompting to garrulity or sullen silence; inspiring petulance or anger, or insipid good-humor and silly conversation; pouring out oaths and curses, or opening the store-house of secrets, — their own and others'. And yet, by some, all these have been thought insufficient evidence to support the charge of intemperate drinking, and to justify a process of discipline before the church. The tongue must falter, and the feet must trip, before, in the estimation of some, professors of religion can be convicted of the crime of intemperance.

To a just and comprehensive knowledge, however, of the crime of intemperance, not only a definition is required, but a philosophical analysis of its mechanical effects upon the animal system.

To those who look only to the outward appearance, the triumphs of intemperance over conscience, and talents, and learning, and character, and interest, and family endearments, have appeared wonderful. But the wonder will cease when we consider the raging desire which it enkindles, and the hand of torment which it lays on every fibre of the body and faculty of the soul.

The stomach is the great organ of accelerated circulation to the blood, of elasticity to the animal spirits, of pleasurable or painful vibration to the nerves, of vigor to the mind, and of fulness to the cheerful affections of the soul. Here is the silver cord of life, and the golden bowl at the fountain, and the wheel at the cistern; and as these fulfil their duty, the muscular and mental and moral powers act in unison, and fill the system with vigor and delight. But, as these central energies are enfeebled, the strength of mind and body declines, and lassitude, and depression, and melancholy, and sighing, succeed to the high beatings of health, and the light of life becomes as darkness.

Experience has decided that any stimulus applied statedly to the stomach, which raises its muscular tone above the point at which it can be sustained by food and sleep, produces, when it has passed away, debility, — a relaxation of the overworked organ proportioned to its preternatural excitement. The life-giving power of the stomach falls, of course, as much below the tone of cheerfulness and health, as it was injudiciously raised above it. If the experiment be repeated often, it produces an artificial tone of stomach, essential to cheerfulness and muscular vigor, entirely above the power of the regular sustenance of nature to afford, and creates a vacuum which nothing can fill but the destructive power which made it; and when protracted use has made the difference great between

the natural and this artificial tone, and habit has made it a second nature, the man is a drunkard, and in ninety-nine instances in a hundred is irretrievably undone. Whether his tongue falter and his feet fail him or not, he will die of intemperance. By whatever name his disease may be called, it will be one of the legion which lie in wait about the path of intemperance, and which abused Heaven employs to execute wrath upon the guilty.

But, of all the ways to hell which the feet of deluded mortals tread, that of the intemperate is the most dreary and terrific. The demand for artificial stimulus to supply the deficiencies of healthful aliment is like the rage of thirst, and the ravenous demand of famine. It is famine; for the artificial excitement has become as essential now to strength and cheerfulness as simple nutrition once was. But nature, taught by habit to require what once she did not need, demands gratification now with a decision inexorable as death, and to most men as irresistible. The denial is a living death. The stomach, the head, the heart and arteries and veins, and every muscle and every nerve, feel the exhaustion, and the restless, unutterable wretchedness which puts out the light of life, and curtains the heavens, and carpets the earth with sackcloth. All these varieties of sinking nature call upon the wretched man, with trumpet-tongue, to dispel this darkness, and raise the ebbing tide of life, by the application of the cause which produced these woes, and after a momentary alleviation will produce them again, with deeper terrors and more urgent importunity; for the repetition at each time renders the darkness deeper, and the torments of self-denial more irresistible and intolerable.

At length, the excitability of nature flags, and stimulants of higher power, and in greater quantities, are required to

rouse the impaired energies of life; until, at length, the whole process of dilatory murder and worse than purgatorial suffering having been passed over, the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is broken, the wheel at the cistern stops, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it.

These sufferings, however, of animal nature, are not to be compared with the moral agonies which convulse the soul. It is an immortal being who sins, and suffers; and as his earthly house dissolves, he is approaching the judgment-seat, in anticipation of a miserable eternity. He feels his captivity, and in anguish of spirit clanks his chains, and cries for help. Conscience thunders, remorse goads, and, as the gulf opens before him, he recoils and trembles, and weeps and prays, and resolves and promises, and reforms, and "seeks it yet again;" again resolves and weeps and prays, and "seeks it yet again." Wretched man! he has placed himself in the hands of a giant who never pities, and never relaxes his iron gripe. He may struggle, but he is in chains. He may cry for release, but it comes not; and Lost! Lost! may be inscribed upon the door-posts of his dwelling.

In the mean time, these paroxysms of his dying moral nature decline, and a fearful apathy, the harbinger of spiritual death, comes on. His resolution, his mental energy, and his vigorous enterprise, fail; and nervous irritation and depression ensue. The social affections lose their fulness and tenderness, conscience loses its power, and the heart its sensibility, until all that was once lovely and of good report retires, and leaves the wretch abandoned to the appetites of a ruined animal. In this deplorable condition, reputation expires, business falters and becomes perplexed, and temptations to drink multiply as inclination to do so increases, and the power of

resistance declines. And now the vortex roars, and the struggling victim buffets the fiery wave with feebler stroke and warning supplication, until despair flashes upon his soul, and, with an outcry that pierces the heavens, he ceases to strive, and disappears.

A sin so terrific should be detected in its origin, and strangled in the cradle; but ordinarily, instead of this, the habit is fixed, and the hope of reformation is gone, before the subject has the least suspicion of danger. It is of vast importance, therefore, that the various occasions of intemperance should be clearly described, that those whose condition is not irretrievable may perceive their danger and escape, and that all who are free may be warned off from these places of temptation and ruin. For the benefit of the young, especially, I propose to lay down a map of the way to destruction, and to rear a monument of warning upon every spot where a wayfaring man has been ensnared and destroyed.

The first occasion of intemperance which I shall mention is found in the free and frequent use of ardent spirits in the family, as an incentive to appetite, an alleviation of lassitude, or an excitement to cheerfulness. In these reiterated indulgences children are allowed to partake, and their tender organs of digestion are early perverted, and predisposed to habits of intemperance. No family, it is believed, accustomed to the daily use of ardent spirits, ever failed to plant the seeds of that dreadful disease which sooner or later produced a harvest of woe. The material of so much temptation and mischief ought not to be allowed a place in the family, except only as a medicine; and even then it would be safer in the hands of the apothecary, to be sent for like other medicine, when prescribed.

Ardent spirits, given as a matter of hospitality, are not

unfrequently the occasion of intemperance. In this case the temptation is a stated inmate of the family. The utensils are present, and the occasions for their use are not unfrequent. And when there is no guest, the sight of the liquor, the state of the health, or even lassitude of spirits, may indicate the propriety of the "prudent use;" until the "prudent use" becomes, by repetition, habitual use, and habitual use becomes irreclaimable intemperance. In this manner, doubtless, has many a father and mother, and son and daughter, been ruined forever.

Of the guests, also, who partake of this family hospitality, the number is not small who become ensnared; especially among those whose profession calls them to visit families often, and many on the same day. Instead of being regarded, therefore, as an act of hospitality, and a token of friendship, to invite our friends to drink, it ought to be regarded as an act of incivility to place ourselves and them in circumstances of such high temptation.

Days of public convocation are extensively the occasions of excess which eventuates in intemperance. The means and temptations are ostentatiously multiplied, and multitudes go forth prepared and resolved to yield to temptation, while example and exhilarated feeling secure the ample fulfilment of their purpose. But when the habit is once acquired of drinking even "*prudently*," as it will be called, on all the days of public convocation which occur in a year, a desire will be soon formed of drinking at other times, until the healthful appetite of nature is superseded by the artificial thirst produced by ardent spirits.

Evening resorts for conversation, enlivened by the cheering bowl, have proved fatal to thousands. Though nothing should be boisterous, and all should seem only the "feast of reason

and the flow of soul," yet, at the latter end, "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Many a wretched man has shaken his chains, and cried out, in the anguish of his spirit, O, that accursed resort of social drinking! there my hands were bound and my feet put in fetters; there I went a freeman, and became a slave,—a temperate man, and became a drunkard.

In the same class of high temptation are to be ranked all convivial associations for the purpose of drinking, with or without gambling and late hours. There is nothing which young men of spirit fear less than the exhilaration of drinking on such occasions, nor anything which they are less able to resist than the charge of cowardice when challenged to drink. But there is no one form of temptation before which more young men of promise have fallen into irretrievable ruin. The connection between such beginnings and a fatal end is so manifest, and the presumptuous daring of Heaven is so great, that God, in his righteous displeasure, is accustomed to withdraw his protection, and abandon the sinner to his own way.

Feeble health and mental depression are to be numbered among the occasions of intemperance. The vital sinking, and muscular debility, and mental darkness, are for a short time alleviated by the application of stimulants. But the cause of this momentary alleviation is applied and repeated, until the habit of excessive drinking is formed, and has become irresistible.

Medical prescriptions have no doubt contributed to increase the number of the intemperate. Ardent spirits, administered in the form of bitters, or as the medium of other medicine, have let in the destroyer; and while the patient was seeking

health at the hand of the physician, *he* was dealing out debility and death.

The distillation of ardent spirits fails not to raise up around the establishment a generation of drunkards. The cheapness of the article, and the ease with which families can provide themselves with large quantities, the product of their own labor, eventuate in frequent drinking and wide-spread intemperance.

The vending of ardent spirits, in places licensed or unlicensed, is a tremendous evil. Here those who have no stated employment loiter away the day for a few potations of rum, and here those who have finished the toils of the day meet to spend a vacant hour, — none content to be lookers-on; all drink, and none for any length of time drink temperately. Here, too, the children of a neighborhood, drawn in by enticements, associate for social drinking, and the exhibition of courage and premature manhood. And here the iron hand of the monster is fastened upon them, at a period when they ought not to have been beyond the reach of maternal observation.

The continued habit of dealing out ardent spirits, in various forms and mixtures, leads also to frequent tasting, and tasting to drinking, and drinking to tippling, and tippling to drunkenness.

A resort to ardent spirits as an alleviation of trouble results often in habits of confirmed intemperance. The loss of friends, perplexities of business, or the wreck of property, bring upon the spirits the distractions of care and the pressure of sorrow; and instead of casting their cares upon the Lord, they resort to the exhilarating draught; but, before the occasion for it has ceased, the remedy itself has become a calamity more

intolerable than the disease. Before, the woes were temporary; now, they have multiplied, and have become eternal.

The use of ardent spirits to invigorate the intellect, or restore exhausted nature under severe study, is often a fatal experiment. Mighty men have been cast down in this manner, never to rise. The quickened circulation does, for a time, invigorate intellect, and restore exhausted nature. But, for the adventitious energy imparted, it exhausts the native energy of the soul, and induces that faintness of heart and flagging of the spirits which cry incessantly, "Give, give," and never, but with expiring breath, say "It is enough."

The use of ardent spirits, employed as an auxiliary to labor, is among the most fatal, because the most common and least suspected causes of intemperance. It is justified as innocent,—it is insisted on as necessary; but no fact is more completely established by experience than that it is utterly useless, and ultimately injurious, besides all the fearful evils of habitual intemperance to which it so often leads. THERE IS NO NUTRITION IN ARDENT SPIRIT. ALL THAT IT DOES IS, TO CONCENTRATE THE STRENGTH OF THE SYSTEM, FOR THE TIME, BEYOND ITS CAPACITY FOR REGULAR EXERTION. It is borrowing strength for an *occasion* which will be needed for futurity, without any provision for payment, and with the certainty of ultimate bankruptcy.

The early settlers of New England endured more hardship, and performed more labor, and carried through life more health and vigor, than appertains to the existing generation of laboring men. And they did it without the use of ardent spirits.

Let two men of equal age and firmness of constitution labor together through the summer, the one with and the other without the excitement of ardent spirits, and the latter

will come out at the end with unimpaired vigor, while the other will be comparatively exhausted. Ships navigated as some now are, without the habitual use of ardent spirits, and manufacturing establishments carried on without, and extended agricultural operations, all move on with better industry, more peace, more health, and a better income to the employers and the employed. The workmen are cheerful and vigorous, friendly and industrious, and their families are thrifty, well fed, well clothed, and instructed; and instead of distress and poverty, and disappointment and contention, they are cheered with the full flow of social affection, and often by the sustaining power of religion. But where ardent spirit is received as a daily auxiliary to labor, it is commonly taken at stated times; the habit soon creates a vacancy in the stomach, which indicates, at length, the hour of the day, with as much accuracy as a clock. It will be taken, besides, frequently at other times, which will accelerate the destruction of nature's healthful tone, create artificial debility, and the necessity of artificial excitement to remove it; and when so much has been consumed as the economy of the employer can allow, the growing demand will be supplied by the evening and morning dram from the wages of labor, until the appetite has become insatiable, and the habit of intemperance nearly universal; until the nervous excitability has obliterated the social sensibilities, and turned the family into a scene of babbling and woe; until voracious appetite has eaten up the children's bread, and abandoned them to ignorance and crime; until conscience has become callous, and fidelity and industry have disappeared, except as the result of eye-service; and wanton wastefulness and contention, and reckless wretchedness, characterize the establishment.

LECTURE II.

THE SIGNS OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

"They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thy heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." PROVERBS 23: 29—35.

IN the preceding lecture I considered the nature and occasions of intemperance. In this I shall disclose some of the symptoms of this fearful malady, as they affect both the body and the mind; that every one who is in any degree addicted to the sin may be apprized of his danger, and save himself before it be too late.

In the early stages of intemperance, reformation is practicable. The calamity is, that intemperance is a sin so deceitful that most men go on to irretrievable ruin, warned, indeed, by many indications, but unavailingly, because they understand not their voice.

It is of vast importance, therefore, that the symptoms of intemperance should be universally and familiarly known.

The effects of the sin upon the body and upon the mind should be so described, in all its stages, from the beginning to the end, that every one may see and feel and recognize these harbingers of death, as soon as they begin to show themselves upon him.

1. One of the early indications of intemperance may be found in the associations of time and place.

In the commencement of this evil habit, there are many who drink to excess only on particular days, such as days for military exhibition, the anniversary of our Independence, the birthday of Washington, Christmas, New-year's day, Election, and others of the like nature. When any of these holidays arrive,—and they come as often almost as saints' days in the calendar,—they bring with them, to many, the insatiable desire of drinking, as well as a dispensation from the sin as efficacious and quieting to the conscience as papal indulgences.

There are some, I am aware, that have recommended the multiplication of holidays and public amusements, as a remedy for intemperance: about as wise a prescription as the multiplying of gambling-houses to put an end to gambling, or the building of theatres to correct the evils of the stage.

There are others who feel the desire of drinking stirred up within them by the associations of place. They could go from end to end of a day's journey without ardent spirits, were there no taverns on the road. But the very sight of these receptacles of pilgrims awakens the desire "just to step in and take something." And so powerful does this association become, that many will no more pass the tavern, than they would pass a fortified place, with all the engines of death directed against them. There are in every city, town, and village, places of resort which, in like manner, as soon as the eye falls upon them, awake the thirst of drinking; and

many, who, in coming to market or on business, pass near them, pay toll there as regularly as they do at the gates; and sometimes both when they come in and when they go out. In cities and their suburbs, there are hundreds of shops at which a large proportion of those who bring in produce stop regularly to receive the customary beverage.

In every community you may observe particular persons, also, who can never meet without feeling the simultaneous desire of strong drink. What can be the reason of this? All men, when they meet, are not affected thus. It is not uncommon for men of similar employments to be drawn by association, when they meet, to the same topics of conversation: physicians, upon the concerns of their profession; politicians, upon the events of the day; and Christians, when they meet, are drawn by a common interest to speak of the things of the kingdom of God. But this is upon the principle of a common interest in these subjects, which have no slight hold upon the thoughts and affections. Whoever, then, finds himself tempted, on meeting his companion or friend, to say, "Come, let us go and take something," or to make it his first business to set out his decanter and glasses, ought to understand that he discloses his own inordinate attachment to ardent spirits, and accuses his friend of intemperance.

2. A disposition to multiply the circumstances which furnish the occasions and opportunities for drinking may justly create alarm that the habit is begun. When you find occasions for drinking in all the variations of the weather,— because it is so hot or so cold, so wet or so dry,— and in all the different states of the system,— when you are vigorous that you need not tire, and when tired that your vigor may be restored,— you have approached near to that state of intemperance in which you will drink in all states of the weather

and conditions of the body, and will drink with these pretexts, and drink without them whenever their frequency may not suffice. In like manner, if on your farm, or in your store or workshop, or on board your vessel, you love to multiply the catches and occasions of drinking, in the forms of treats for new comers, for mistakes, for new articles of dress or furniture, until in some places a man can scarcely wear an article of dress, or receive one of equipage or furniture, which has not been "wet;" you may rely on it that all these usages and rules and laws are devices to gratify an inordinate and dangerous love of strong drink; and though the master of the shop should not himself come down to such little measures, yet if he permits such things to be done, if he hears, and sees, and smiles, and sometimes sips a little of the forfeited beverage, his heart is in the thing, and he is under the influence of a dangerous love of that hilarity which is produced by strong drink.

3. Whoever finds the desire of drinking ardent spirits returning daily at stated times, is warned to deny himself instantly, if he intends to escape confirmed intemperance.

It is infallible evidence that you have already done violence to nature, that the undermining process is begun,— that the overworked organ begins to flag, and cry out for adventitious aid, with an importunity which, if indulged, will become more deep-toned and importunate and irresistible, until the power of self-denial is gone, and you are a ruined man. It is the vortex begun, which, if not checked, will become more capacious and deep, and powerful and loud, until the interests of time and eternity are engulfed.

It is here, then, beside this commencing vortex, that I would take my stand, to warn off the heedless navigator from destruction. To all who do but heave in sight, and with

voice that should rise above the winds and waves, I would cry, "Stand off! spread the sail, ply the oar, for death is here!" And could I command the elements, the blackness of darkness should gather over this gateway to hell, and loud thunders should utter their voices, and lurid fires should blaze, and the groans of unearthly voices should be heard, inspiring consternation and flight in all who came near. For this is the parting point between those who forsake danger and hide themselves, and the foolish who pass on and are punished. He who escapes this periodical thirst of times and seasons will not be a drunkard, as he who comes within the reach of this powerful attraction will be sure to perish. It may not be certain that every one will become a sot; but it is certain that every one will enfeeble his body, generate disease, and shorten his days. It may not be certain that every one will sacrifice his reputation, or squander his property and die in the almshouse; but it is certain that a large proportion will come to poverty and infamy, of those who yield daily to the periodical appetite for ardent spirits. Here is the stopping-place; and though beyond it men may struggle, and retard and modify their progress, none, comparatively, who go by it, will return again to purity of enjoyment, and the sweets of temperate liberty. The servant has become the master, and, with a rod of iron and a whip of scorpions, he will torment, even before their time, the candidates for misery in a future state.

4. Another sign of intemperance may be found in the desire of concealment. When a man finds himself disposed to drink oftener and more than he is willing to do before his family and the world, and begins to drink slyly and in secret places, he betrays a consciousness that he is disposed to drink more than to others will appear safe and proper; and what

he *suspects* others may think, he ought to suppose they have *cause* to think, and reform instantly. For now he has arrived at a period in the history of intemperance, where, if he does not stop, he will hasten on to ruin with accelerated movement. So long as the eye of friendship and a regard to public observation kept him within limits, there was some hope of reformation; but when he cuts this last cord, and launches out alone with his boat and bottle, he has committed himself to mountain waves and furious winds, and probably will never return.

5. When a man allows himself to drink always in company so much as he may think he can bear without awakening in others the suspicion of inebriation, he will deceive himself, and no one besides. For abused nature herself will publish the excess, in the bloated countenance, and flushed visage, and tainted breath, and inflamed eye; and were all these banners of intemperance struck, the man with his own tongue will reveal his shame. At first there will be something strange in his appearance or conduct, to awaken observation and induce scrutiny, until, at length, with all his carefulness, in some unguarded moment, he will take more than he can bear. And now the secret is out, and these unaccountable things are explained: these exposures will become more frequent, the unhappy man still dreaming that, though he erred a little, he took such good care to conceal it that no one knew it but himself. He will even talk when his tongue is palsied, to ward off suspicion; and thrust himself into company, to show that he is not drunk.

6. Those persons who find themselves, for some cause, always irritated when efforts are made to suppress intemperance, and moved by some instinctive impulse to make oppo-

sition, ought to examine instantly whether the love of ardent spirits is not the cause of it.

An aged country merchant, of an acute mind and sterling reputation, once said to me, "I never knew an attempt made to suppress intemperance which was not opposed by some persons from whom I should not have expected opposition; and I never failed to find, first or last, that these persons were themselves implicated in the sin." Temperate men seldom, if ever, oppose the movements in favor of temperance.

7. We now approach some of those symptoms of intemperance which abused nature, first or last, never fails to give.

The eyes. — "Who hath redness of eyes?" All are not, of course, intemperate, whose visual organs become inflamed and weak. But there are few intemperate persons who escape this malady; and yet, when it comes, they have no suspicion of the cause, — speak of it without embarrassment, and wonder what the matter can be, — apply to the physician for eye-water, and drink on. But every man who is accustomed to drink ardent spirits freely, whose eye begins to redden and to weep, ought to know what the matter is, and to take warning; it is one of the signals which distressed nature holds out and waves, in token of distress.

Another indication of intemperance is found in the fulness and redness of the countenance. It is not the fulness and freshness of health, but rather the plethora of a relaxed fibre and peccant humors, which come to occupy the vacancy of healthful nutrition, and to mar the countenance with pimples and inflammation. All are not intemperate, of course, who are affected with diseases of the skin. But no hard drinker carries such a face without a guilty and specific cause, and it is another signal of distress which abused nature holds out, while she cries for help.

Another indication of intemperance may be found in impaired muscular strength, and tremor of the hand. Now the destroyer in his mining process approaches the citadel of life, and is advancing fast to make the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves. This relaxation of the joints and trembling of the nerves will be experienced especially in the morning, when the system, unsustained by sleep, has run down. Now all is relaxed, tremulous, and faint-hearted. The fire which sparkled in the eye the evening before is quenched, the courage which dilated the heart is passed away, and the tones of eloquence which dwelt on the inspired tongue are turned into pusillanimous complainings; until opium, or bitters, or both, are thrown into the stomach, to wind up again the run-down machine.

And now the liver, steeped in fire, begins to contract, and refuses to perform its functions in preparing the secretions which are necessary to aid digestion: and loss of appetite ensues; and indigestion and fermentation and acidity begin to rob the system of nutrition, and to vex and irritate the vital organ, filling the stomach with air, and the head with fumes, and the soul with darkness and terror.

This reiterated irritation extends by sympathy to the lungs, which become inflamed and lacerated, until hemorrhage ensues. And now the terrified victim hastens to the physician to stay the progress of a consumption which intemperance has begun, and which medical treatment, while the cause continues, cannot arrest.

About this time, the fumes of the scalding furnace below begin to lacerate the throat, and blister the tongue and the lip. Here, again, the physician is called in, to ease these torments; but until the fires beneath are extinct, what can the physician do? He can no more alleviate these woes than he

can carry alleviation to the tormented in the flames for which these are the sad preparations.

Another indication of intemperance is irritability, petulance, and violent anger. The great organ of nervous sensibility has been brought into a state of tremulous excitement. The slightest touch causes painful vibrations and irritations, which defy self-government. The temper becomes like the flash of powder, or ungovernable and violent as the helm driven hither and thither by raging winds and mountain waves.

Another indication of intemperance is to be found in the extinction of all the finer feelings and amiable dispositions of the soul; and if there have ever seemed to be religious affections, of these also. The fiery stimulus has raised the organ of sensibility above the power of excitement by motives addressed to the finer feelings of the soul and of the moral nature, and left the man a prey to animal sensation. You might as well fling out music upon the whirlwind to stay its course, as to govern the storm within by the gentler feelings of humanity. The only stimulant which now has power to move is ardent spirit; and he who has arrived at this condition is lost. He has left far behind the wreck of what he once was. He is not the same husband, or father, or brother, or friend. The sea has made a clear breach over him, and swept away forever whatsoever things are pure, and lovely, and of good report.

And as to religion, if he ever seemed to have any, all such affections declined as the emotions of artificial stimulants arose, until conscience has lost its power, or survives only with vulture scream to flap the wing and terrify the soul. His religious affections are dead when he is sober, and rise only to emotion and loquacity and tears when he is drunk.

Dead, twice dead, is he, whatever may have been the hopes he once indulged, or the evidence he once gave, or the hopes he once inspired. For drunkards, no more than murderers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

As the disease makes progress, rheumatic pains diffuse themselves throughout the system. The man wonders what can be the reason that he should be visited by such a complication of diseases, and again betakes himself to the physician, and tries every remedy but the simple one of temperance. For these pains are only the murmurings and complainings of nature, through all the system giving signs of woe, that all is lost. For to rheumatic pains ensues a debility of the system, which becoming unable to sustain the circulation, the fluids fall first upon the feet; and as the deluge rises, the chest is invaded, and the breath is shortened, until by a sudden inundation it is stopped. Or, if in this form death is avoided, it is only to be met in another, more dilatory but no less terrific; for now comes on the last catastrophe, — the sudden prostration of strength and appetite, an increased difficulty of raising the ebbing tide of life by stimulants, a few panic-struck reformations, just on the sides of the pit, until the last sinking comes, from which there is no resurrection, but by the trump of God and at the judgment-day.

And now the woes and the sorrows and the contentions and the wounds and babblings are over; the red eye sleeps, the tortured body rests, the deformed visage is hid from human observation, and the soul, while the dust crumbles back to dust, returns to God who gave it, to receive according to the deeds done in the body.

Such is the evil which demands a remedy. And what can be done to stop its ravages, and rescue its victims?

This is not the place to say all that belongs to this part of

the subject; but we cannot close without saying, by anticipation, a few things here; and,

1. There should be extended through the community an all-pervading sense of the danger there is of falling into this sin. Intemperance is a disease as well as a crime; and were any other disease, as contagious, of as marked symptoms, and as mortal, to pervade the land, it would create universal consternation, — for the plague is scarcely more contagious or deadly; and yet we mingle fearlessly with the diseased, and, in spite of admonition, we bring into our dwellings the contagion, apply it to the lip, and receive it into the system.

I know that much is said about the prudent use of ardent spirit; but we might as well speak of the prudent use of the plague, of fire handed prudently around among powder, of poison taken prudently every day, or of vipers and serpents introduced prudently into our dwellings, to glide about as a matter of courtesy to visiters, and of amusement to our children.

First or last, in spite of your prudence, the contagion will take; the fatal spark will fall upon the train, the deleterious poison will tell upon the system, and the fang of the serpent will inflict death. There is no prudent use of ardent spirit but when it is used as a medicine. All who receive it into the system are not destroyed by it. But if any vegetable were poisonous to as many as the use of ardent spirit proves destructive to, it would be banished from the table; it would not be prudent to use it at all. If, in attempting to cross a river upon an elastic beam, as many should fall in and be drowned as attempt to use ardent spirit *prudently* and fail, the attempt to cross in that way would be abandoned — there would be no prudent use of that mode of crossing. The effect of attempting to use ardent spirit prudently is

destructive to such multitudes as to preclude the possibility of prudence in the use of it. With a knowledge of the deceitful nature of this sin, and its irresistible power when it has obtained an ascendency, no man, while he uses ardent spirit, can, without mocking God, offer the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." There is no necessity for using it at all, and it is presumptuous to do so.

2. A wakeful recollection should be maintained of the distinction between intemperance and drunkenness. So long as men suppose that there is neither crime nor danger in drinking, short of what they denominate drunkenness, they will cast off fear, and move onward to ruin by a silent, certain course, until destruction comes upon them, and they cannot escape. It should be known, therefore, and admitted, that to drink daily at stated times any quantity of ardent spirit, is intemperance; or to drink periodically, as often as days and times and seasons may furnish temptation and opportunity, is intemperance. It may not be for any one time the intemperance of animal or mental excitement, but it is an innovation upon the system, and the beginning of a habit which cannot fail to generate disease, and will not be pursued by one hundred men without producing many drunkards.

It is not enough, therefore, to erect the flag ahead, to mark the spot where the drunkard lies. It must be planted at the entrance of his course, proclaiming, in waving capitals, THIS IS THE WAY TO DEATH! Over the whole territory of "prudent use," it must wave and warn. For, if we cannot stop men in the beginning, we cannot separate between that and the end. He who lets ardent spirit alone before it is meddled with is safe, and he only. It should be in every family a contraband article; or, if it is admitted, it should be allowed for medical purposes only. It should be labelled as we label

laudanum; and TOUCH NOT, TASTE NOT, HANDLE NOT, should meet the eye on every vessel which contains it.

Children should be taught early the nature, symptoms and danger, of this sin, that they may not unwittingly fall under its power. To save my own children from this sin has been no small part of my solicitude as a parent; and I can truly say, that should any of my children perish in this way, they will not do it ignorantly nor unwarned. I do not remember that I ever gave permission to a child to go out on a holiday, or gave a pittance of money to be expended for his gratification, unattended by the earnest injunction not to drink ardent spirits, or any inebriating liquor; and I cannot but believe, that if proper exertions are made in the family to apprize children of the nature and danger of this sin, and to put them on their guard against it, opinions and feelings and habits might be so formed, that the whole youthful generation might rise up as a rampart, against which the fiery waves of intemperance would dash in vain, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." To all our schools, instruction on this subject should be communicated, and the Sabbath-schools now spreading through the land may in this manner lend a mighty influence to prevent the intemperance of the rising generation.

In respect to the reformation of those over whom the habit of intemperance has obtained an ascendency, there is but one alternative; they must resolve upon immediate and entire abstinence.

Some have recommended, and many have attempted, a gradual discontinuance. But no man's prudence and fortitude are equal to the task of reformation in this way. If the patient were in close confinement, where he could not help himself, he might be dealt with in this manner; but it would

be cruelly protracting a course of suffering through months, which might be ended in a few days. But no man at liberty will reform by gradual retrenchment.

Substitutes have also been recommended as the means of reformation, — such as opium, which is only another mode of producing inebriation, is often a temptation to intemperance, and not unfrequently unites its own forces with those of ardent spirits to impair health and destroy life. It is a preternatural stimulant, raising excitement above the tone of health, and predisposing the system for intemperate drinking.

Strong beer has been recommended as a substitute for ardent spirit, and a means of leading back the captive to health and liberty. But, though it may not create intemperate habits as soon, it has no power to allay them. It will even finish what ardent spirit has begun; and with this difference only, that it does not rasp the vital organs with quite so keen a file, and enables the victim to come down to his grave by a course somewhat more dilatory, and with more of the good-natured stupidity of the idiot, and less of the demoniac frenzy of the madman.

Wine has been prescribed as a means of decoying the intemperate from the ways of death. But habit cannot be thus cheated out of its dominion, nor ravening appetite be amused down to a sober and temperate demand. If it be true that men do not become intemperate on wine, it is not true that wine will restore the intemperate, or stay the progress of the disease. Enough must be taken to screw up nature to the tone of cheerfulness, or she will cry, "Give," with an importunity not to be resisted; and long before the work of death is done, wine will fail to minister a stimulus of sufficient activity to rouse the flagging spirits, or will become acid on the enfeebled stomach, and brandy and opium will be called

in to hasten to its consummation the dilatory work of self-destruction. So that, if no man becomes a sot upon wine, it is only because it hands him over to more fierce and terrible executioners of Heaven's delayed vengeance.

If in any instance wine suffices to complete the work of ruin, then the difference is only that the victim is stretched longer upon the rack, to die in torture with the gout, while ardent spirits finish life by a shorter and perhaps less painful course.

Retrenchments and substitutes, then, are idle, and if in any case they succeed, it is not in one of a thousand. It is the tampering of an infant with a giant, the effort of a kitten to escape from the paw of a lion.

There is no remedy for intemperance but the cessation of it. Nature must be released from the unnatural war which is made upon her, and be allowed to rest; and then nutrition and sleep and exercise will perform the work of restoration. Gradually the springs of life will recover tone, appetite will return, digestion become efficient, sleep sweet, and the muscular system vigorous, until the elastic heart, with every beat, shall send health through the system, and joy through the soul.

But what shall be done for those to whom it might be fatal to stop short? Many are reputed to be in this condition, probably, who are not; and those who are may, while under the care of a physician, be dealt with as he may think best for the time, provided they obey strictly, as patients, his prescription. But if, when they are committed to their own care again, they cannot live without ardent spirits, then they must die, and have only the alternative to die as reformed penitents, or as incorrigibly intemperate, — to die in a manner which shall secure pardon and admission to heaven,

or in a manner which shall exclude them forever from that holy world.

As the application of this discourse, I would recommend to every one of you who hear it immediate and faithful self-examination, to ascertain whether any of the symptoms of intemperance are beginning to show themselves upon you. And let not the consideration that you have never been suspected, and have never suspected yourselves, of intemperance, deprive you of the benefit of this scrutiny. For it is inattention and self-confidence which supersede discretion and banish fear, and let in the destroyer to fasten upon his victim before he thinks of danger, or attempts resistance.

Are there, then, set times, days, and places, when you calculate always to indulge yourself in drinking ardent spirits? Do you stop often to take something at the tavern when you travel, and always when you come to the village, town, or city? This frequency of drinking will plant in your system, before you are aware of it, the seeds of the most terrific disease which afflicts humanity. Have you any friends or companions whose presence, when you meet them, awakens the thought and the desire of drinking? Both of you have entered on a course in which there is neither safety nor hope, but from instant retreat.

Do any of you love to avail yourselves of every little catch and circumstance among your companions to bring out "a treat"? "Alas, my lord, there is death in the pot!"

Do you find the desire of strong drink returning daily, and at stated hours? Unless you intend to travel all the length of the highway of intemperance, it is time to stop. Unless you intend soon to resign your liberty forever, and come under a despotism of the most cruel and inexorable character,

you must abandon the morning bitters, the noontide stimulant, and the evening bowl.

Do any of you drink in secret, because you are unwilling your friends or the world should know how much you drink? You might as well cut loose in a frail boat before a hurricane, and expect safety: you are gone, gone irretrievably, if you do not stop.

Are you accustomed to drink, when opportunities present, as much as you can bear without any public tokens of inebriation? You are an intemperate man now, and unless you check the habit, you will become rapidly more and more intemperate, until concealment becomes impossible.

Do your eyes, in any instance, begin to trouble you, by their weakness or inflammation? If you are in the habit of drinking ardent spirits daily, you need not ask the physician what is the matter, nor inquire for eye-water. Your redness of eyes is produced by intemperance; and abstinence, and that only, will cure them. It may be well for every man who drinks daily to look in the glass often, that he may see in his own face the signals of distress which abused nature holds out, one after another, and too often holds out in vain.

Do any of you find a tremor of the hand coming upon you, and sinking of spirits, and loss of appetite in the morning? Nature is failing, and giving to you timely admonition of her distress.

Do the pains of a disordered stomach, and blistered tongue and lip, begin to torment you? You are far advanced in the work of self-destruction; a few more years will probably finish it.

LECTURE III.

THE EVILS OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory." HABAKKUK 2: 9—11, 15, 16.

IN the preceding lectures we have illustrated THE NATURE, THE OCCASIONS, AND THE SYMPTOMS OF INTEMPERANCE.

In this lecture we propose to illustrate THE EVILS OF INTEMPERANCE.

The physical and moral influence of this sin upon its victims has of necessity been disclosed, in giving an account of the causes and symptoms of this criminal disease. We shall, therefore, take a more comprehensive view of the subject, and consider the effect of intemperance upon national prosperity. To this view of the subject the text leads us. It announces the general principle, that communities which rise by a violation of the laws of humanity and equity shall not prosper, and especially that wealth amassed by promoting intemper-

ance will bring upon the community intemperance and poverty and shame, as a providential retribution.

1. The effects of intemperance upon the health and physical energies of a nation are not to be overlooked, or lightly esteemed.

No fact is more certain than the transmission of temperament and of physical constitution, according to the predominant moral condition of society, from age to age. Luxury produces effeminacy, and transmits to other generations imbecility and disease. Bring up the generation of the Romans who carried victory over the world, and place them beside the effeminate Italians of the present day, and the effect of crime upon constitution will be sufficiently apparent. Excesses unmake the man. The stature dwindles, the joints are loosely compacted, and the muscular fibre has lost its elastic tone. No giant's bones will be found in the cemeteries of a nation over whom for centuries the waves of intemperance have rolled; and no unwieldy iron armor, the annoyance and defence of other days, will be dug up as memorials of departed glory.

The duration of human life, and the relative amount of health or disease, will manifestly vary according to the amount of ardent spirits consumed in the land. Even now, no small proportion of the deaths which annually make up our national bills of mortality are cases of those who have been brought to an untimely end, and who have, directly or indirectly, fallen victims to the deleterious influence of ardent spirits; fulfilling, with fearful accuracy, the prediction, the wicked "shall not live out half their days." As the jackal follows the lion to prey upon the slain, so do disease and death wait on the footsteps of inebriation. The free and universal use of intoxicating liquors for a few centuries cannot fail to bring

down our race from the majestic, athletic forms of our fathers to the similitude of a despicable and puny race of men. Already the commencement of the decline is manifest; and the consummation of it, should the causes continue, will not linger.

2. The injurious influence of general intemperance upon national intellect is equally certain, and not less to be deprecated.

To the action of a powerful mind, a vigorous muscular frame is, as a general rule, indispensable. Like heavy ordnance, the mind, in its efforts, recoils on the body, and will soon shake down a puny frame. The mental action and physical reäction must be equal; or, finding her energies unsustained, the mind itself becomes discouraged, and falls into despondency and imbecility. The flow of animal spirits, the fire and vigor of the imagination, the fulness and power of feeling, the comprehension and grasp of thought, the fire of the eye, the tones of the voice, and the electrical energy of utterance, all depend upon the healthful and vigorous tone of the animal system; and by whatever means the body is unstrung, the spirit languishes. Cæsar, when he had a fever once, and cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius," was not that god who afterwards overturned the republic, and reigned without a rival; and Bonaparte, it has been said, lost the Russian campaign by a fever. The greatest poets and orators who stand on the records of immortality flourished in the iron age, before the habits of effeminacy had unharnessed the body and unstrung the mind. This is true of Homer and Demosthenes and Milton; and if Virgil and Cicero are to be classed with them, it is not without a manifest abatement of vigor for beauty, produced by the progress of voluptuousness in the age in which they lived.

The giant writers of Scotland are, some of them, men of threescore and ten, who still go forth to the athletic sports of their youthful days, with undiminished elasticity. The taper fingers of modern effeminacy never wielded such a pen as these men wield, and never will.

The taste may be cultivated in alliance with effeminacy, and music may flourish, while all that is manly is upon the decline; and there may be some fitful flashes of imagination in poetry, which are the offspring of a capricious nervous excitability; and perhaps there may be sometimes an unimpassioned stillness of soul in a feeble body, which shall capacitate for simple intellectual discrimination. But that fulness of soul, and diversified energy of mind, which is indispensable to national talent in all its diversified application, can be found only in alliance with an undebased and vigorous muscular system.

The history of the world confirms this conclusion. Egypt, once at the head of nations, has, under the weight of her own effeminacy, gone down to the dust. The victories of Greece let in upon her the luxuries of the East, and covered her glory with the night of ages. And Rome, whose iron foot trod down the nations and shook the earth, witnessed in her latter days faintness of heart, and the shield of the mighty vilely cast away.

3. The effect of intemperance upon the military prowess of a nation cannot but be great and evil. The mortality in the seasoning of recruits already half destroyed by intemperance will be double to that experienced among hardy and temperate men.

If, in the early wars of our country, the mortality of the camp had been as great as it has been since intemperance has facilitated the raising of recruits, New England would have

been depopulated, Philip had remained lord of his wilderness, or the French had driven our fathers into the sea, extending from Canada to Cape Horn the empire of despotism and superstition. An army whose energy in conflict depends on the excitement of ardent spirits cannot possess the requisite coolness, nor sustain the shock of a powerful onset, like an army of determined temperate men. It was the religious principle and temperance of Cromwell's army that made it terrible to the licentious troops of Charles the First.

4. The effect of intemperance upon the patriotism of a nation is neither obscure nor doubtful. When excess has despoiled the man of the natural affections of husband, father, brother, and friend, and thrust him down to the condition of an animal, we are not to expect of him comprehensive views, and a disinterested regard for his country. His patriotism may serve as a theme of sinister profession, or inebriate boasting. But what is the patriotism which loves only in words, and in general, and violates in detail all the relative duties on which the welfare of country depends?

The man might as well talk of justice and mercy who robs and murders upon the highway, as he whose example is pestiferous, and whose presence withers the tender charities of life, and perpetuates weeping, lamentation, and woe. A nation of drunkards would constitute a hell.

5. Upon the national conscience or moral principle, the effects of intemperance are deadly.

It obliterates the fear of the Lord and a sense of accountability, paralyzes the power of conscience, hardens the heart, and turns out upon society a sordid, selfish, ferocious animal.

6. Upon national industry, the effects of intemperance are manifest and mischievous.

The results of national industry depend on the amount of well-directed intellectual and physical power. But intemperance paralyzes and prevents both these springs of human action.

In the inventory of national loss by intemperance may be set down the labor prevented by indolence, by debility, by sickness, by quarrels and litigation, by gambling and idleness, by mistakes and misdirected efforts, by improvidence and wastefulness, and by the shortened date of human life and activity. Little wastes in great establishments constantly occurring, may defeat the energies of a mighty capital. But where the intellectual and muscular energies are raised to the working point daily, by ardent spirits, until the agriculture and commerce and arts of a nation move on by the power of artificial stimulus, that moral power cannot be maintained which will guarantee fidelity, and that physical power cannot be preserved and well directed which will insure national prosperity. The nation whose immense enterprise is thrust forward by the stimulus of ardent spirits cannot ultimately escape debility and bankruptcy.

When we behold an individual cut off in youth or in middle age, or witness the waning energies, improvidence, and unfaithfulness, of a neighbor, it is but a single instance, and we become accustomed to it; but such instances are multiplying in our land in every direction, and are to be found in every department of labor, and the amount of earnings prevented or squandered is incalculable; to all which must be added the accumulating and frightful expense incurred for the support of those, and their families, whom intemperance has made paupers. In every city and town the poor-tax, created chiefly

by intemperance, is augmenting. The receptacles for the poor are becoming too strait for their accommodation. We must pull them down and build greater, to provide accommodations for the votaries of inebriation; for the frequency of going upon the town has taken away the reluctance of pride, and destroyed the motives to providence, which the fear of poverty and suffering once supplied. The prospect of a destitute old age, or of a suffering family, no longer troubles the vicious portion of our community. They drink up their daily earnings, and bless God for the poor-house; and begin to look upon it as, of right, the drunkard's home, and contrive to arrive thither as early as idleness and excess will give them a passport to this sinecure of vice. Thus is the insatiable destroyer of industry marching through the land, rearing poor-houses, and augmenting taxation: night and day, with sleepless activity, squandering property, cutting the sinews of industry, undermining vigor, engendering disease, paralyzing intellect, impairing moral principle, cutting short the date of life, and rolling up a national debt, invisible, but real and terrific as the debt of England; continually transferring larger and larger bodies of men, from the class of contributors to the national income, to the class of worthless consumers.

Add to the loss sustained by the subtraction of labor and the shortened date of life the expense of sustaining the poor created by intemperance, and the nation is now taxed annually more than the expense which would be requisite for the maintenance of government, and for the support of all our schools and colleges, and all the religious instruction of the nation. Already a portion of the entire capital of the nation is mortgaged for the support of drunkards. There seems to be no other fast property in the land, but this inheritance of

the intemperate; all other riches may make to themselves wings and fly away. But, until the nation is bankrupt, according to the laws of the state, the drunkard and his family must have a home. Should the pauperism of crime augment in this country as it has done for a few years past, there is nothing to stop the frightful results which have come upon England, where property is abandoned in some parishes, because the poor-tax exceeds the annual income. You, who are husbandmen, are accustomed to feel as if your houses and lands were wholly your own; but if you will ascertain the percentage of annual taxation levied on your property for the support of the intemperate, you will perceive how much of your capital is held by drunkards, by a tenure as sure as if held under mortgages or deeds of warranty. Your widows and children do not take by descent more certainly than the most profligate and worthless part of the community. Every intemperate and idle man whom you behold tottering about the streets, and steeping himself at the stores, regards your houses and lands as pledged to take care of him, — annually puts his hands deep into your pockets, and eats his bread in the sweat of your brows, instead of his own; and with marvellous good-nature you bear it. If a robber should break loose on the highway, to levy taxation, an armed force would be raised to hunt him from society. But the tippler may do it fearlessly in open day, and not a voice is raised, not a finger is lifted.

7. The effects of intemperance upon civil liberty may not be lightly passed over.

It is admitted that intelligence and virtue are the pillars of republican institutions, and that the illumination of schools, and the moral power of religious institutions, are indispensable to produce this intelligence and virtue.

But who are found so uniformly in the ranks of irreligion as the intemperate? Who like these violate the Sabbath, and set their mouth against the heavens, — neglecting the education of their families, and corrupting their morals? Almost the entire amount of national ignorance and crime is the offspring of intemperance. Throughout the land, the intemperate are hewing down the pillars and undermining the foundations of our national edifice. Legions have besieged it, and upon every gate the battle-axe rings; and still the sentinels sleep.

Should the evil advance as it has done, the day is not far distant when the great body of the laboring classes of the community, the bones and sinews of the nation, will be contaminated; and when this is accomplished, the right of suffrage becomes the engine of self-destruction. For the laboring classes constitute an immense majority, and when these are perverted by intemperance, ambition needs no better implements with which to dig the grave of our liberties, and entomb our glory.

Such is the influence of interest, ambition, fear, and indolence, that one violent partisan, with a handful of disciplined troops, may overrule the influence of five hundred temperate men, who act without concert. Already is the disposition to temporize, to tolerate, and even to court the intemperate, too apparent, on account of the apprehended retribution of their perverted suffrage. The whole power of law through the nation sleeps in the statute-book; and until public sentiment is roused and concentrated, it may be doubted whether its execution is possible.

Where is the city, town, or village, in which the laws are not openly violated; and where is the magistracy that dares to carry into effect the laws against the vending or drinking

of ardent spirits? Here, then, an aristocracy of bad influence has already risen up, which bids defiance to law, and threatens the extirpation of civil liberty. As intemperance increases, the power of taxation will come more and more into the hands of men of intemperate habits and desperate fortunes; of course, the laws gradually will become subservient to the debtor, and less efficacious in protecting the rights of property. This will be a vital stab to liberty, to the security of which property is indispensable. For money is the sinew of war; and when those who hold the property of a nation cannot be protected in their rights, they will change the form of government, — peaceably if they may, by violence if they must.

In proportion to the numbers who have no right in the soil, and no capital at stake, and no moral principle, will the nation be exposed to violence and revolution. In Europe the physical power is bereft of the right of suffrage, and by the bayonet is kept down; but in this nation the power which may be wielded by the intemperate and ignorant is tremendous. These are the troops of the future Cæsars, by whose perverted suffrages our future elections may be swayed, and ultimately our liberties destroyed. They are the corps of irreligious and desperate men, who have something to hope, and nothing to fear, from revolution and blood. Of such materials was the army of Catiline composed, who conspired against the liberties of Rome. And in the French revolution, such men as Lafayette were soon swept from the helm, by mobs composed of the dregs of creation, to give place to the revolutionary furies which followed.

We boast of our liberties, and rejoice in our prospective instrumentality in disenthralling the world. But our own

foundations rest on the heaving sides of a burning mountain, through which, in thousands of places, the fire has burst out, and is blazing around us. If it cannot be extinguished, we are undone; our sun is fast setting, and the darkness of an endless night is closing in upon us.

LECTURE IV.

THE REMEDY OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory." HABAKKUK 2: 9—11, 15, 16.

WE now come to the inquiry, BY WHAT MEANS CAN THE EVIL OF INTEMPERANCE BE STAYED? And the answer is, not by any *one thing*, but by everything which can be put in requisition, to hem in the army of the destroyer, and impede his march, and turn him back, and redeem the land.

Intemperance is a national sin, carrying destruction from the centre to every extremity of the country, and calling upon the nation to array itself *en masse* against it.

It is in vain to rely alone upon self-government, and voluntary abstinence. This, by all means, should be encouraged and enforced, and may limit the evil, but can never expel it. Alike hopeless are all the efforts of the pulpit and the press, without something more radical, efficient, and permanent. If knowledge only, or argument, or motive, were needed, the task

of reformation would be easy; but argument may as well be exerted upon the wind, and motive be applied to chain down the waves. Thirst and the love of filthy lucre are incorrigible. Many may be saved by these means; but, with nothing more, many will be lost, and the evil will go down to other ages.

Alike hopeless is the attempt to stop intemperance by mere civil coërcion. There is too much capital vested in the importation, distillation, and vending of ardent spirits, and too brisk a demand for their consumption in the market, to render mere legal enactments and prohibitions of sufficient influence to keep the practice of trafficking in ardent spirits within safe limits. As well might the ocean be poured out upon the Andes, and its waters be stopped from rushing violently down their sides. It would require an omniscient eye, and an almighty arm, punishing with speedy and certain retribution all delinquents, to stay the progress of intemperance in the presence of the all-pervading temptation of ardent spirits.

Magistrates WILL NOT, and CANNOT if they would, execute the laws against the unlawful vending and drinking of ardent spirits, amid a population who hold the right of suffrage, and are in favor of free indulgence. The effort, before the public sentiment was prepared for it, would hurl them quick from their elevation, and exalt others who would be no terror to evil-doers. Our fathers could enforce morality by law; but the times are changed, and unless we can regulate public sentiment, and secure morality in some other way, WE ARE UNDONE.

Voluntary associations to support the magistrate in the execution of the law are useful, but, after all, are ineffectual; for though in a single town or state they may effect a temporary reformation, it requires an effort to make them

universal, and to keep up their energy, which never has been and never will be made.

Besides, the reformation of a town, or even of a state, is but emptying of its waters the bed of a river, to be instantly replaced by the waters from above; or, like the creation of a vacuum in the atmosphere, which is instantly filled by the pressure of the circumjacent air.

The remedy, whatever it may be, must be universal—operating permanently, at all times, and in all places. Short of this, everything which can be done will be but the application of temporary expedients.

There is somewhere a mighty energy of evil at work in the production of intemperance; and until we can discover and destroy this vital power of mischief, we shall labor in vain.

Intemperance in our land is not accidental; it is rolling in upon us by the violation of some great laws of human nature. In our views, and in our practice as a nation, there is something fundamentally wrong; and the remedy, like the evil, must be found in the correct application of general principles. It must be a universal and national remedy.

What, then, is this universal, natural, and national remedy for intemperance?

IT IS THE BANISHMENT OF ARDENT SPIRITS FROM THE LIST OF LAWFUL ARTICLES OF COMMERCE, BY A CORRECT AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC SENTIMENT; SUCH AS HAS TURNED SLAVERY OUT OF HALF OF OUR LAND, AND WILL YET EXPEL IT FROM THE WORLD.

Nothing should now be said by way of crimination for the past; for verily we have all been guilty in this thing, so that there are few in the land whose brother's blood may not cry out against them from the ground, on account of the bad

influence which has been lent in some way to the work of destruction.

We are not, therefore, to come down in wrath upon the distillers, and importers, and vendors, of ardent spirits. None of us are enough without sin to cast the first stone. For who would have imported, or distilled, or vended, if all the nominally temperate in the land had refused to drink? It is the buyers who have created the demand for ardent spirits, and made distillation and importation a gainful traffic. And it is the custom of the temperate, too, which inundates the land with the occasion of so much and such unmanageable temptation. Let the temperate cease to buy, and the demand for ardent spirits will fall in the market three-fourths, and ultimately will fail wholly, as the generation of drunkards shall hasten out of time.

To insist that men whose capital is embarked in the production or vending of ardent spirits shall manifest the entire magnanimity and self-denial which is needful to save the land, though the example would be glorious to them, is more than we have a right to expect or demand. Let the consumer do his duty, and the capitalist, finding his employment unproductive, will quickly discover other channels of useful enterprise. All language of impatient censure against those who embarked in the traffic of ardent spirits while it was deemed a lawful calling, should therefore be forborne. It would only serve to irritate, and arouse prejudice, and prevent investigation, and concentrate a deaf and deadly opposition against the work of reformation. No *ex post facto* laws. Let us all rather confess the sins which are past, and leave the things which are behind, and press forward in one harmonious attempt to reform the land, and perpetuate our invaluable blessings.

This, however, cannot be done effectually, so long as the traffic in ardent spirits is regarded as lawful, and is patronized by men of reputation and moral worth, in every part of the land. Like slavery, it must be regarded as sinful, impolitic, and dishonorable. That no measures will avail, short of rendering ardent spirits a contraband of trade, is nearly self-evident.

Could intemperance be stopped, did all the rivers in the land flow with inebriating and fascinating liquids? But the abundance and cheapness of ardent spirits is such, that, surrounded as it is by the seductions of company, and every artifice of entertainment, it is more tempting and fatal than if it flowed freely as water. Then, like the inferior creation, men might be expected to drink when athirst, and to drink alone. But intemperance now is a social sin, and on that account exerts a power terrific and destructive as the plague.

That the traffic in ardent spirits is wrong, and should be abandoned, as a great national evil, is evident from the following considerations:

1. It employs a multitude of men, and a vast amount of capital, to no useful purpose. The medicinal use of ardent spirits is allowed; for this, however, the apothecary can furnish an adequate supply: but, considered as an article of commerce for ordinary use, it adds nothing to animal or social enjoyment, to muscular power, to intellectual vigor, or moral feeling. It does, indeed, produce paroxysms of muscular effort, of intellectual vigor, and of exhilarated feeling; but this is done only by an improvident draft upon nature by anticipation, to be punished by a languor and debility proportioned to the excess. No man leaves behind him a more valuable product of labor, as the result of artificial stimulus, than the even industry of unstimulated nature would have

produced; or blesses the world with better specimens of intellectual power; or instructs it by a better example; or drinks enjoyment from a fuller, sweeter cup, than that which nature provides. But if the premises are just, who can resist the conclusion? To what purpose is all this waste? Is it not the duty of every man to serve his generation in some useful employment? Is not idleness a sin? But in what respect does that occupation differ from idleness which adds nothing to national prosperity, or to individual or social enjoyment? Agriculture, commerce, and the arts, are indispensable to the perfection of human character, and the formation of the happiest state of society; and if some evils are inseparable from their prosecution, there is a vast overbalancing amount of good But where is the good produced by the traffic in ardent spirit, to balance the enormous evils inseparable from the trade? What drop of good does it pour into the ocean of misery which it creates? And is all this expense of capital, and time, and effort, to be sustained for nothing? Look at the mighty system of useless operations; the fleet of vessels running to and fro; the sooty buildings throughout the land, darkening the heavens with their steam and smoke; the innumerable company of boats, and wagons, and horses, and men,—a more numerous cavalry than ever shook the blood-stained plains of Europe,—a larger convoy than ever bore on the waves the baggage of an army, and more men than were ever devoted at once to the work of desolation and blood. All these begin, continue, and end their days, in the production and distribution of a liquid, the entire consumption of which is useless. Should all the capital thus employed, and all the gains acquired, be melted into one mass, and thrown into the sea, nothing would be subtracted from national wealth

or enjoyment. Had all the men and animals slept the whole time, no vacancy of good had been occasioned.

Is this, then, the manner in which rational beings should be willing to spend their days; in which immortal beings should fill up the short period of their probation, and make up the account to be rendered to God of the deeds done in the body; in which benevolent beings, desiring to emulate the goodness of the great God, should be satisfied to employ their powers?

It is admitted that the trade employs and sustains many families, and that in many instances the profits are appropriated to useful purposes. But this is no more than might have been said of the slave-trade. The same families might be as well sustained in some other way, and the same profits might be earned and applied to useful purposes in some other calling. The earth is not so narrow, nor population so dense, nor the useful avocations so overstocked, as that large portions of time, and capital, and labor, may be devoted to the purpose of sustaining life merely, without reference to public utility.

The merchant who deals in ardent spirit is himself a loser: for a temperate population consume more, and pay better, and live longer, than the intemperate; and among such a population, merchants would do more business, and secure better profits, than when they depend for any part of their gains upon the sale of ardent spirit. What merchant, looking out for a place where to establish himself in trade, would neglect the invitation of temperate, thrifty farmers and mechanics, and settle down in a village of riot and drunkenness, made up of tipplers, widows, and beggared children,—of old houses, broken windows, and dilapidated fences?

I push not this argument reproachfully, but for the purpose of awakening conscientious investigation. We are a free

people. No imperial *ukase*, or forest of bayonets, can make us moral and industrious, or turn us back, if we go astray. Our own intelligence and moral energy must reclaim us, or we shall perish in our sins.

2. The amount of suffering and mortality inseparable from the commerce in ardent spirit renders it an unlawful article of trade.

The wickedness is proverbial of those who, in ancient days, caused their children to pass through the fire unto Moloch. But how many thousands of children are there in our land, who endure daily privations and sufferings which render life a burden, and would have made the momentary pang of infant sacrifice a blessing! Theirs is a lingering, living death. There never was a Moloch to whom were immolated yearly as many children as are immolated, or kept in a state of constant suffering, in this land of nominal Christianity. We have no drums and gongs to drown their cries; neither do we make convocations, and bring them all out for one mighty burning. The fires which consume them are slow fires, and they blaze balefully in every part of our land, throughout which the cries of injured children and orphans go up to heaven. Could all these woes, the product of intemperance, be brought out into one place, and the monster who inflicts the sufferings be seen personified, the nation would be furious with indignation. Humanity, conscience, religion, all would conspire to stop a work of such malignity.

We are appalled and shocked at the accounts from the East, of widows burned upon the funeral-piles of their departed husbands. But what if those devotees of superstition, the Brahmins, had discovered a mode of prolonging the lives of the victims for years amid the flames, and by these protracted burnings were accustomed to torture life away?

We might almost rouse up a crusade to cross the deep, to stop by force such inhumanity. But, alas! we should leave behind us, on our own shores, more wives in the fire than we should find of widows thus sacrificed in all the East; a fire, too, which, besides its action upon the body, tortures the soul, by lost affections, and ruined hopes, and prospective wretchedness.

It is high time to enter upon the business of collecting facts on this subject. The statistics of intemperance should be published; for no man has comprehended, as yet, the height and depth and length and breadth of this mighty evil.

We execrate the cruelties of the slave-trade: the husband torn from his wife; the son from his father; brothers and sisters separated forever; whole families in a moment ruined! But are there no similar enormities to be witnessed in the United States? None, indeed, perpetrated by the bayonet, but many, very many, perpetrated by intemperance.

Every year, thousands of families are robbed of fathers, brothers, husbands, friends. Every year, widows and orphans are multiplied, and gray hairs are brought with sorrow to the grave. No disease makes such inroads upon families, blasts so many hopes, destroys so many lives, and causes so many mourners to go about the streets because man goeth to his long home.

We have heard of the horrors of the middle passage, the transportation of slaves,—the chains, the darkness, the stench, the mortality, and living madness of woe,—and it is dreadful. But bring together the victims of intemperance, and crowd them into one vast lazar-house, and sights of woe quite as appalling would meet your eyes.

Yes, in this nation there is a "middle passage" of slavery,

and darkness, and chains, and disease, and death. But it is a middle passage, not from Africa to America, but from time to eternity; and not of slaves whom death will release from suffering, but of those whose sufferings at death do but just begin. Could all the sighs of these captives be wafted on one breeze, it would be loud as thunder. Could all their tears be assembled, they would be like the sea.

The health of a nation is a matter of vast importance, and none may directly and avowedly sport with it. The importation and dissemination of fevers for filthy lucre's sake would not be endured; and he who should import and plant the seed of trees which, like the fabled Upas, poisoned the atmosphere, and paved the earth around with bones, would meet with universal execration. The construction of morasses and stagnant lakes, sending out poisonous exhalations, and depopulating the country around, would soon be stopped by the interposition of law. And should a foreign army land upon our shores, to levy such a tax upon us as intemperance levies, and to threaten our liberties as intemperance threatens them, and to inflict such enormous sufferings as intemperance inflicts, no mortal power could resist the tide of indignation that would overwhelm it.

It is only in the form of ardent spirit, in the way of a lawful trade extended over the entire land, that fevers may be imported and disseminated; that trees of death may be planted; that extensive morasses may be opened, and a moral *miasma* spread over the nation; and that an armed host may land, to levy upon us enormous taxations, to undermine our liberties, bind our hands, and put our feet in fetters. This dreadful work is going on, and yet the nation sleeps. Say not that all these evils result from the abuse of ardent spirit; for, as human nature is constituted, the abuse is as

certain as any of the laws of human nature. The commerce, therefore, in ardent spirit, which produces no good, and produces a certain and an immense amount of evil, must be regarded as an unlawful commerce, and ought, upon every principle of humanity, and patriotism, and conscience, and religion, to be abandoned and proscribed.

LECTURE V.

THE REMEDY OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory." HABAKKUK 2: 9—11, 15, 16.

We have endeavored to show that commerce in ardent spirit is unlawful,

1. Inasmuch as it is useless; and,

2. As it is eminently pernicious.

We now proceed to adduce further evidence of its unlawfulness; and observe,

3. That it seems to be a manifest violation of the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and of various other evangelical precepts.

No man can act in the spirit of impartial love to his neighbor, who, for his own personal emolument, inflicts on him great and irreparable evil; for "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Love will not burn a neighbor's house, or poison his food, or blast his reputation, or destroy his soul. But

the commerce in ardent spirit does all this inevitably and often. Property, reputation, health, life, and salvation, fall before it.

The direct infliction of what is done indirectly would subject a man to the ignominy of a public execution. Is it not forbidden, then, by the command which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves? "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Be willing to do for others whatever you may demand of them, and inflict nothing upon them which you would not be willing to receive. But who is willing to be made a drunkard, and to have his property squandered and his family ruined, for his neighbor's emolument? Good were it for the members of a family if they had never been born, rather than to have all the evils visited upon them which are occasioned by the sale of ardent spirit.

It is scarcely a palliation of this evil that no man is destroyed maliciously, or with any direct intent to kill; for the certainty of evil is as great as if waters were poisoned which some persons would surely drink, or as if a man should fire, in the dark, upon masses of human beings, where it must be certain that death would be the consequence to some.

Those who engage in this traffic are exposed to temptations to intemperance which no man will needlessly encounter who has that regard to the preservation of his own life and virtue which the law of God requires. All who are employed in vending ardent spirit in small quantities do not, of course, become intemperate. But the company in whose presence they pass so much of their time, and the constant habit of mixing and tasting, have been the means of casting down many strong men wounded. It is also a part of the

threatened retribution, that those who amass property by promoting intemperance in others shall themselves be punished, by falling under the dominion of the same sin. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also. Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory."

The injustice which is so inseparable from the traffic in ardent spirit evinces its unlawfulness. Those who vend ardent spirit will continue to supply their customers, in many instances, after they have ceased to be competent to take care of their property. They are witnesses to their dealing with a slack hand, their improvidence, and the accumulation of their debts; and, to save themselves, must secure their own claims by obtaining mortgages on the property of these wretched victims, which they finally foreclose, and thus wind up the scene. And are they not in this way accessory to the melting away of estates, and the ruin of families around them? And can all this be done without violating the laws of humanity and equity? Human laws may not be able to prevent the wrong; but the cries of widows and orphans will be heard in heaven, and a retribution which human tribunals cannot award will be reserved for the day of judgment. Is it not an "evil covetousness" that rolls up an estate by such methods? It is like "building a town with blood, and establishing a city by iniquity." And can those who do thus escape the woe denounced against him "that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth his bottle to him, and maketh him drunken"?

Can it be denied that the commerce in ardent spirit makes

fearful havoc of property, morals, and life? Does it not shed blood as really as the sword, and more blood than is shed by war? In this point, none are better witnesses than physicians; and, according to their testimony, intemperance is one of the greatest destroyers of virtue, health, and life.

It is admitted that commerce generally lays a heavy tax upon life and morals. But it is an evil inseparable from a course of things which is actually indispensable to civilization. The entire melioration of the human condition seems to depend upon it; so that, were commerce to cease, agriculture would fall back to the simple production of a supply without surplus, — destroying the arts, and cutting the sinews of industry. But the commerce in ardent spirit stands on a different ground: its evils are compensated by no greater good; it promotes no good purpose which would not prosper better without it; it does not afford property to those who engage in it which they might not accumulate in some other way; nor does it give the least adventitious aid to agriculture or the arts. Everything needful to a perfect state of society can exist without it; and with it such a state of society can never be attained. It retards the accomplishment of that prophecy of Scripture which foretells the time when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, and violence and fraud shall cease.

The consideration, that those to whose injury we are accessory, by the sale of ardent spirit, are destroyed also by the perversion of their own free agency, and that the evil is silent and slow-paced in its march, doubtless subtracts in no small degree from the keen sense of accountability and crime which would attend the administration of arsenic, or the taking of life by the pistol or the dagger, — as does also the consideration, that although we may withhold the cup, yet

from some other source the deleterious potion will be obtained.

But all this alters not the case. He who deliberately assists his neighbor to destroy his life is not guiltless because his neighbor is a free agent, and is also guilty; and he is accessory to the crime, though twenty other persons might have been ready to commit the same sin, if he had not done it. Who would sell arsenic to his neighbor to destroy himself, because he could obtain it elsewhere? Who would sell a dagger for the known purpose of assassination, because, if it were refused, it could be purchased in another place? We are accountable for our own wrong-doing, and liable to punishment at the hand of God, as really as if it had been certain that no one would do the deed, if we did not.

The ungodliness in time, and the everlasting ruin in eternity, inseparable from the commerce in ardent spirit, proscribe it as an unlawful article of traffic.

Who can estimate the hatred of God, of his Word and worship, and of his people, which it occasions; or number the oaths and blasphemies it causes to be uttered, or the violations of the Sabbath, the impurities and indecencies, violence and wrong-doing, which it originates? How many thousands does it detain, every Sabbath-day, from the house of God, — cutting them off from the means of grace, and hardening them against their efficacy! How broad is the road which intemperance alone opens to hell, and how thronged with travellers!

Why is all this increase of ungodliness and crime? Is not the desperate wickedness of the heart sufficient, without artificial excitement? If the commerce were inseparable from all the great and good ends of our social being, we might endure the evil for the sake of the good, and they only be

accountable who abuse themselves. But here is an article of commerce spread over the land, whose effect is evil only and continually, and which increases a hundred-fold the energies of human depravity and the hopeless victims of future punishment.

Drunkenness is a sin which excludes from heaven. The commerce in ardent spirit, therefore, productive only of evil in time, fits for destruction and turns into hell multitudes which no man can number.

I am aware that, in the din of business and the eager thirst for gain, the consequences of our conduct upon our views, and the future destiny of our fellow-men, are not apt to be realized, or to modify our course.

But has not God connected with all lawful avocations the welfare of the life that now is, and of that which is to come? And can we lawfully amass property by a course of trade which fills the land with beggars and widows and orphans and crimes; which peoples the grave-yard with premature mortality, and the world of woe with the victims of despair? Could all the forms of evil produced in the land by intemperance come upon us in one horrid array, it would appall the nation, and put an end to the traffic in ardent spirit. If, in every dwelling built by blood, the stone from the wall should utter all the cries which the bloody traffic extorts, and the beam out of the timber should echo them back, who would build such a house, and who would dwell in it? What if in every part of the dwelling, from the cellar upward, through all the halls and chambers, babblings, and contentions, and voices, and groans, and shrieks, and wailings, were heard day and night! What if the cold blood oozed out, and stood in drops upon the walls; and, by preternatural art, all the ghastly skulls and bones of the victims destroyed by intemperance should stand

upon the walls, in horrid sculpture, within and without the building! Who would rear such a building? What if at eventide and at midnight the airy forms of men destroyed by intemperance were dimly seen haunting the distilleries and stores where they received their bane, or following the track of the ship engaged in the commerce, — walking upon the waves, flitting athwart the deck, sitting upon the rigging, and sending up, from the hold within and from the waves without, groans and loud laments and wailings! Who would attend such stores? Who would labor in such distilleries? Who would navigate such ships?

Oh! were the sky over our heads one great whispering-gallery, bringing down about us all the lamentation and woe which intemperance creates, and the firm earth one sonorous medium of sound, bringing up around us from beneath the wailings of the damned, whom the commerce in ardent spirit had sent thither, — these tremendous realities, assailing our senses, would invigorate our conscience, and give decision to our purpose of reformation! But these evils are as real as if the stone did cry out of the wall, and the beam answered it; as real as if, day and night, wailings were heard in every part of the dwelling, and blood and skeletons were seen upon every wall; as real as if the ghostly forms of departed victims flitted about the ship, as she passed over the billows, and showed themselves nightly about stores and distilleries, and with unearthly voices screamed in our ears their loud lament. They are as real as if the sky over our heads collected and brought down about us all the notes of sorrow in the land, and the firm earth should open a passage for the wailings of despair to come up from beneath.

But it will be said, What can be done? and ten thousand voices will reply, "Nothing, oh, nothing; men always have

drunk to excess, and they always will; there is so much capital embarked in the business of importation and distillation, and so much supposed gain in vending ardent spirit, and such an insatiable demand for it, and such ability to pay for it by high-minded, wilful, independent freemen, that nothing can be done."

Then, farewell, a long farewell, to all our greatness! The present abuse of ardent spirit has grown out of what was the prudent use of it, less than one hundred years ago; then, there was very little intemperance in the land, — most men, who drank at all, drank temperately. But if the prudent use of ardent spirit one hundred years ago has produced such results as now exist, what will the present intemperate use accomplish in a century to come? Let no man turn off his eye from this subject, or refuse to reason, and remain blind to the inference that there is a moral certainty of a wide-extended ruin, without reformation. The seasons are not more sure to roll, the sun to shine, or the rivers to flow, than the present enormous consumption of ardent spirit is sure to produce the most deadly consequences to the nation. It will be consumed in a compound ratio, and there is a physical certainty of the dreadful consequences. Have you taken the dimensions of the evil, its manifold and magnifying miseries, its sure-paced and tremendous ruin? And shall it come unresisted by prayer, and without a finger lifted to stay the desolation?

What if all men had cried out, as some did, at the commencement of the Revolutionary struggle, "Alas, we must submit; we must be taxed; nothing can be done. Oh, the fleets and armies of England, we cannot stand before them!" Had such counsels prevailed, we should have abandoned a righteous cause, and forfeited that aid of Heaven, for which

men are always authorized to trust in God, who are disposed to do his will.

Nothing can be done? Why can nothing be done? Because the intemperate will not stop drinking, shall the temperate keep on, and become drunkards? Because the intemperate cannot be reasoned with, shall the temperate become madmen? And because force will not avail with men of independence and property, does it follow that reason and conscience, and the fear of the Lord, will have no influence?

And because the public mind is now unenlightened and unawakened and unconcentrated, does it follow that it cannot be enlightened and aroused and concentrated, in one simultaneous and successful effort? Reformations as much resisted by popular feeling, and impeded by ignorance, interest, and depraved obstinacy, have been accomplished, through the medium of a rectified public opinion; and no nation ever possessed the opportunities and the means that we possess, of correctly forming the public opinion; nor was a nation ever called upon to attempt it by motives of such imperious necessity. Our all is at stake; we shall perish, if we do not effect it. There is nothing, that ought to be done, which a free people cannot do.

The science of self-government is the science of perfect government, which we have yet to learn and teach, or this nation and the world must be governed by force. But we have all the means, and none of the impediments, which hinder the experiment amid the dynasties and feudal despotisms of Europe. And what has been done justifies the expectation that all which yet remains to be done will be accomplished. The abolition of the slave-trade, an event now almost accomplished, was once regarded as a chimera of benevolent dreaming. But the band of Christian heroes who consecrated

their lives to the work, may some of them survive to behold it achieved. This greatest of evils upon earth, this stigma of human nature, wide-spread, deep-rooted, and intrenched by interest and state policy, is passing away before the unbending requisitions of enlightened public opinion.

No great melioration of the human condition was ever achieved without the concurrent effort of numbers; and no extended, well-directed application of moral influence was ever made in vain. Let the temperate part of the nation awake and reform, and concentrate their influence in a course of systematic action, and success is not merely probable, but absolutely certain. And cannot this be accomplished; cannot the public attention be aroused and set in array against the traffic in ardent spirit, and against its use? With just as much certainty can the public sentiment be formed and put in motion, as the waves can be moved by the breath of heaven, or the massive rock, balanced on the precipice, can be pushed from its place of repose; and when the public sentiment once begins to move, its march will be as resistless as the same rock thundering down the precipice. Let no man, then, look upon our condition as hopeless, or feel, or think, or say, that nothing can be done. The language of Heaven to our happy nation is, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt;" and there is no despondency more fatal or more wicked than that which refuses to hope and to act, from the apprehension that nothing can be done.

LECTURE VI.

THE REMEDY OF INTEMPERANCE.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory." HABAKKUK 2: 9—11, 15, 16.

LET us now take an inventory of the things which can be done to resist the progress of intemperance. I shall set down nothing which is chimerical, — nothing which will not commend itself to every man's judgment, as entirely practicable.

1. It is entirely practicable to extend universal information on the subject of intemperance. Its nature, causes, evils, and remedy, may be universally made known. Every pulpit and every newspaper in the land may be put in requisition to give line upon line on this subject, until it is done. The national Tract Society may, with great propriety, volunteer in this glorious work, and send out its warning voice, by winged messengers, all over the land. And would all this accomplish nothing? It would prevent the formation of intemperate

habits in millions of instances, and it would reclaim thousands in the early stages of this sin.

2. It is practicable to form an association for the special purpose of superintending this great subject, whose untiring energies shall be exerted in sending out agents, to pass through the land, collect information, confer with influential individuals and bodies of men, deliver addresses at popular meetings, and form societies auxiliary to the parent institution. This not only may be done, but, I am persuaded, will be done, before another year shall have passed away.* Too long have we slept. From every part of the land we hear of the doings of the destroyer, and yet the one-half is not told. But when the facts are collected and published, will not the nation be moved? It will be moved. All the laws of the human mind must cease, if such disclosures as may be made do not produce a great effect.

3. Something has been done, and more may be done, by agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing establishments, in the exclusion of ardent spirit as an auxiliary to labor. Every experiment which has been made by capitalists, to exclude ardent spirit and intemperance, has succeeded, and greatly to the profit and satisfaction both of the laborer and his employer. And what is more natural and easy than the extension of such examples by capitalists, and by voluntary associations, in cities, towns, and parishes, of mechanics and farmers, whose resolutions and success may, from time to time, be published, to raise the flagging tone of hope, and assure the land of her own self-preserving powers? Most

* These discourses were composed and delivered at Litchfield, in the year 1826 : since that time, the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance has been formed, and is now in successful operation.

assuredly it is not too late to achieve a reformation; our hands are not bound, our feet are not put in fetters; and the nation is not so fully set upon destruction, as that warning and exertion will be in vain. It is not too much to be hoped, that the entire business of the nation, by land and by sea, shall yet move on without the aid of ardent spirits, and by the impulse alone of temperate freemen. This would cut off one of the most fruitful occasions of intemperance, and give to our morals and to our liberties an earthly immortality.

The young men of our land may set glorious examples of voluntary abstinence from ardent spirits, and by associations for that purpose may array a phalanx of opposition against the encroachments of the destroyer; while men of high official standing and influence may cheer us by sending down the good example of their firmness and independence, in the abolition of long-established but corrupting habits.

All the professions, too, may volunteer in this holy cause, and each lift up its warning voice, and each concentrate the power of its own blessed example. Already, from all clerical meetings, the use of ardent spirits is excluded; and the medical profession have also commenced a reform in this respect which, we doubt not, will prevail. Nor is it to be expected that the bar, or the agricultural interest, as represented in agricultural societies, will be deficient in magnanimity and patriotic zeal, in purifying the morals and perpetuating the liberties of the nation. A host may be enlisted against intemperance which no man can number, and a moral power be arrayed against it which nothing can resist.

All denominations of Christians in the nation may, with great ease, be united in the effort to exclude the use and the commerce in ardent spirits. They alike feel and deplore the evil, and, united, have it in their power to put a stop to it.

This union may be accomplished through the medium of a national society. There is no object for which a national society is more imperiously demanded, or for which it can be reared under happier auspices. God grant that three years may not pass away, before the entire land shall be marshalled, and the evils of intemperance be seen like a dark cloud passing off, and leaving behind a cloudless day.

The churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, of every name, can do much to aid in this reformation. They are organized to shine as lights in the world, and to avoid the very appearance of evil. A vigilant discipline is doubtless demanded in the cases of members who are of a lax and doubtful morality in respect to intemperance. It is not enough to cut off those who are past reformation, and to keep those who, by close watching, can be preserved in the use of their feet and tongue. Men who are mighty to consume strong drink, are unfit members of that kingdom which consisteth not in "meat and drink," but in "righteousness and peace." The time, we trust, is not distant, when the use of ardent spirits will be proscribed by a vote of all the churches in our land; and when the commerce in that article shall, equally with the slave-trade, be regarded as inconsistent with a credible profession of Christianity. All this, I have no doubt, can be accomplished with far less trouble than is now constantly occasioned by the maintenance or the neglect of discipline, in respect to cases of intemperance.

The Friends, in excluding ardent spirit from the list of lawful articles of commerce, have done themselves immortal honor; and in the temperance of their families, and their thrift in business, have set an example which is worthy the admiration and imitation of all the churches in our land.

When the preceding measures have been carried, something

may be done by legislation to discourage the distillation and importation of ardent spirit, and to discountenance improper modes of vending it. Then, the suffrage of the community may be expected to put in requisition men of talents and integrity, who, sustained by their constituents, will not hesitate to frame the requisite laws, and to give to them their salutary power. Even now there may be an amount of suffrage sufficient, could it be concentrated and expressed, to sustain laws which might go to limit the evil; but it is scattered, it is a dispersed, unorganized influence, and any effort to suppress intemperance by legislation now, before the public is prepared for an efficient coöperation, could terminate only in defeat. Republics must be prepared by moral sentiment for efficient legislation.

Much may be accomplished to discountenance the commerce in ardent spirits, by a silent, judicious distribution of patronage in trade.

Let that portion of the community who would exile from society the traffic in ardent spirits bestow their custom upon those who will agree to abandon it, and a regard to interest will soon produce a competition in well-doing. The temperate population of a city or town are the best customers, and have it in their power to render the commerce in ardent spirits disadvantageous to those who engage in it. This would throw an irresistible argument upon the side of reformation. There are many now who would gladly be released from the necessity of dealing in spirituous liquors, but they think that their customers would not bear it. Let their sober customers, then, take off their fears on this hand and array them on the other, and a glorious reformation is achieved. When the temperate part of the community shall not only declaim against mercantile establishments which thrive by the dissemi-

nation of moral contagion, but shall begin to act with a silent but determined discrimination, the work is done. And can any conscientious man fail to make the experiment? "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." If we countenance establishments in extending and perpetuating a national calamity, are we not partakers in other men's sins? How many thousands may be saved from entering into temptation, and how many thousands rescued who have entered, if temperate families will give their custom to those who have abandoned the traffic in ardent spirits! And to how much crime and suffering and blood shall we be accessory, if we fail to do our duty in this respect. Let every man, then, bestow his custom in the fear of the Lord, and as he expects to give an account with joy or grief, of the improvement or neglect of that powerful means of effecting moral good.

When all these preliminary steps have been taken, petitions may be addressed to the Legislatures of the States and to Congress, by all denominations, each under its own proper name, praying for legislative interference to protect the health and morals of the nation. This will call to the subject the attention of the ablest men in the nation, and enable them to touch some of the springs of general action with compendious energy. They can reach the causes of disastrous action when the public sentiment will bear them out in it, and can introduce principles which, like the great laws of nature, will, with silent simplicity, reform and purify the land.

And now, could my voice be extended through the land to all orders and descriptions of men, I would "cry aloud and spare not." To the watchmen upon Zion's walls, appointed to announce the approach of danger, and to say unto the wicked man, "Thou shalt surely die," I would say, Can we hold our peace, or withhold the influence of our example, in

such an emergency as this, and be guiltless of blood? Are we not called upon to set examples of entire abstinence? How otherwise shall we be able to preach against intemperance, and reprove, rebuke, and exhort? Talk not of "habit," and of "prudent use," and a little for the "stomach's sake." This is the way in which men become drunkards. Our security and our influence demand immediate and entire abstinence. If nature would receive a shock by such a reformation, it proves that it has already been too long delayed, and can safely be deferred no longer.

To the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, — whom he hath purchased with his blood, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify them to himself a peculiar people, — I would say, Beloved in the Lord, the world hath need of your purified example; for who will make a stand against the encroachments of intemperance, if professors of religion will not? Will you not, then, abstain from the use of it entirely, and exile it from your families? Will you not watch over one another with keener vigilance, and lift an earlier note of admonition, and draw tighter the bands of brotherly discipline, and with a more determined fidelity cut off those whom admonition cannot reclaim? Separate, brethren, between the precious and the vile, the living and the dead, and burn incense between them, that the plague may be stayed.

To the physicians of the land I would cry for help, in this attempt to stay the march of ruin. Beloved men, possessing our confidence by your skill, and our hearts by your assiduities, in seasons of alarm and distress, combine, I beseech you, and exert, systematically and vigorously, the mighty power you possess, on this subject, over the national understanding and will! Beware of planting the seeds of intemperance in the course of your professional labors, and become our guar-

dian angels to conduct us in the paths of health and of virtue; Fear not the consequence of fidelity in admonishing your patients, when diseased by intemperance, of the cause and the remedy of their malady: and whenever one of you shall be rejected for your faithfulness, and another be called in to prophesy smooth things, let all the intemperate and all the land know, that in the whole nation there are no false prophets among physicians, who for filthy lucre will cry "Peace!" to their intemperate patients, when there is no peace to them but in reformation. Will you not speak out on this subject in all your medical societies, and provide tracts sanctioned by your high professional authority, to be spread over the land?

Ye magistrates, to whom the law has confided the discretionary power of giving license for the vending of ardent spirits, and the sword for the punishment of the violations of law; though you alone could not resist the burning tide, yet, when the nation is moved with fear, and is putting in requisition her energies to strengthen your hands, will you not stand up to your duty, and do it fearlessly and firmly? No class of men in the community possess as much direct power as you possess; and, when sustained by public sentiment, your official influence and authority may be made irresistible. Remember, then, your designation by Heaven to office for this self-same thing; and, as you would maintain a conscience void of offence, and give up to God a joyful account, be faithful! Through you, let the violated law speak out, and righteousness and peace become the stability of our times.

To the governments of the States and of the nation, appointed to see to it "that the commonwealth receives no detriment," while they facilitate and guide the energies of a free people, and protect the boundless results of industry, I

would say, Beloved men and highly honored, how ample and how enviable are your opportunities of doing good; and how trivial and contemptible and momentary are the results of civil policy merely, while moral principle, that main-spring of the soul, is impaired and destroyed by crime! Under the auspices of the national and state governments, science, commerce, agriculture, and the arts flourish, and our wealth flows in like the waves of the sea. But where is the wisdom of filling up by a thousand streams the reservoir of national wealth, to be poured out again by as many channels of profusion and crime? Colleges are reared and multiplied by public munificence, while academies and common schools enlighten the land. But to what purpose, when a single crime sends up exhalations enough to eclipse half the stars and suns destined to enlighten our moral hemisphere, before they have reached their meridian?

The medical profession is patronized, and ought to be; and the standard of medical attainment is rising. But a single prevalent crime, unresisted, throws into the distance all the achievements of art, and multiplies disease and death much faster than the improvements in medical science can multiply the means of preventing them.

The improvements by steam and by canals augment the facilities and the motives to national industry; but, while intemperance rages and increases, it is only to pour the tide of wealth into one mighty vortex, which swallows it up, and, with a voice of thunder and the insatiable desire of the grave, cries, Give, give; and saith not, It is enough.

Republican institutions are guaranteed to the States, and the whole nation watches with sleepless vigilance the altar of liberty; but a mighty despot, whose army is a legion, has invaded the land, carrying in his course taxation, and chains,

and fire, and the rack; insomuch that the whole land bleeds and groans at every step of his iron foot, at every movement of his massy sceptre, at every pulsation of his relentless heart. And yet, in daylight and at midnight, he stalks unmolested; while his myrmidons, with infernal joy, are preparing an ocean of blood in which our sun may set, never to rise.

The friends of the Lord and his Christ, with laudable enterprise, are rearing temples to Jehovah, and extending his Word and ordinances through the land, while the irreligious influence of this single crime balances, or nearly balances, the entire account.

And now, ye venerable and honorable men, raised to seats of legislation in a nation which is the freest, and is destined to become the greatest, and may become the happiest upon earth; can you, will you, behold unmoved the march of this mighty evil? Shall it mine in darkness, and lift fearlessly its giant form in daylight, and deliberately dig the grave of our liberties, and entomb the last hope of enslaved nations, and nothing be done by the national government to stop the destroyer? With the concurrent aid of an enlightened public sentiment, you possess the power of a most efficacious legislation; and, by your example and influence, you of all men possess the best opportunities of forming a correct and irresistible public sentiment on the side of temperance. Much power to you is given to check and extirpate this evil, and to roll down to distant ages, broader and deeper and purer, the streams of national prosperity. Save us by your wisdom and firmness, save us by your own example, and, "as in duty bound, we will ever pray."

Could I call around me, in one vast assembly, the temperate young men of our land, I would say, Hopes of the nation, blessed be ye of the Lord, now in the dew of your youth!

But look well to your footsteps; for vipers, scorpions, and adders surround your way. Look at the generation who have just preceded you: the morning of their life was cloudless, and it dawned as brightly as your own; but, behold them bitten, swollen, enfeebled, inflamed, debauched, idle, poor, irreligious, and vicious; with halting step dragging onward to meet an early grave! Their bright prospects are clouded, and their sun is set never to rise. No house of their own receives them, while from poorer to poorer tenements they descend, and to harder and harder fare, as improvidence dries up their resources. And now, who are those that wait on their footsteps, with muffled faces and sable garments? That is a father, and that is a mother, whose gray hairs are coming with sorrow to the grave. That is a sister, weeping over evils which she cannot arrest; and there is the broken-hearted wife; and there are the hapless children, for whom their father has provided the inheritance only of dishonor, and nakedness, and woe. And is this, beloved young men, the history of your course? In this scene of desolation, do you behold the image of your future selves? Is this the poverty and disease which as an armed man shall take hold on you? And are your fathers, and mothers, and sisters, and wives, and children, to succeed to those who now move on in this mournful procession, weeping as they go? Yes; bright as your morning now opens, and high as your hopes beat, this is your noon and your night, unless you shun those habits of intemperance which have thus early made theirs a day of clouds and of thick darkness. If you frequent places of evening resort for social drinking; if you set out with drinking daily a little, temperately, prudently, it is yourselves which, as in a glass, you behold.

Might I select specific objects of address, — to the young

husbandman or mechanic, I would say, Happy man! your employment is useful and honorable, and with temperance and industry, you rise to competence, and rear up around you a happy family, and transmit to them, as a precious legacy, your own fair fame. But look around you; are there none who were once in your condition, whose health and reputation and substance are gone? What would tempt you to exchange conditions? And yet, sure as seed-time and harvest, if you drink daily, at stated times, and visit from evening to evening the resorts of social drinking, or stop to take refreshment as you enter or retire from the city, town, or village, yours will become the condition of those ruined farmers and artisans around you.

To another I would say, You are a man of wealth, and may drink to the extinction of life without the risk of impoverishment; but look at your neighbor, his bloated face, and inflamed eye, and blistered lip, and trembling hand; he, too, is a man of wealth, and may die of intemperance without the fear of poverty.

Do you demand "what I have to do with such examples." Nothing, if you take warning by them. But if you, too, should cleave to the morning bitters, and the noontide dram, and the evening beverage, you have in these signals of ruin the memorials of your own miserable end; for the same causes, in the same circumstances, will produce the same effects.

To the affectionate husband I would say, Behold the wife of thy bosom, young and beautiful as the morning; and yet her day may be overcast with clouds, and all thy early hopes be blasted. Upon her the fell destroyer may lay his hand, and plant in that healthful frame the seeds of disease, and transmit to successive generations the inheritance of crime

and woe. Will you not watch over her with ever-wakeful affection, and keep far from your abode the occasions of temptation and ruin? Call around you the circle of your healthful and beautiful children. Will you bring contagion into such a circle as this? Shall those sparkling eyes become inflamed, those rosy cheeks purpled and bloated, that sweet breath be tainted, those ruby lips blistered, and that vital tone of unceasing cheerfulness be turned into tremor and melancholy? Shall those joints so compact be unstrung, that dawning intellect be clouded, those affectionate sensibilities benumbed, and those capacities for holiness and heaven be filled with sin, and "fitted for destruction"? Oh, thou father, was it for this that the Son of God shed his blood for thy precious offspring; that, abandoned and even tempted by thee, they should destroy themselves, and pierce thy heart with many sorrows? Wouldst thou let the wolf into thy sheep-fold among the tender lambs; wouldst thou send thy flock to graze about a den of lions? Close, then, thy doors against a more ferocious destroyer, and withhold the footsteps of thy immortal progeny from places of resort more dangerous than the lions' den. Should a serpent of vast dimensions surprise in the field one of your little group, and wreathe about his body its cold, elastic folds, tightening with every yielding breath its deadly gripe, how would his cries pierce your soul, and his strained eyeballs, and convulsive agonies, and imploring hands, add wings to your feet and supernatural strength to your arms! But, in this case, you could approach with hope to his rescue. The keen edge of steel might sunder the elastic fold, and rescue the victim, who, the moment he is released, breathes freely and is well again. But the serpent Intemperance twines about the body of your child a deadlier gripe, and extorts a keener cry of distress, and mocks your

effort to relieve him by a fibre which no steel can sunder. Like Laocoon, you can only look on while bone after bone of your child is crushed, till his agonies are over, and his cries are hushed in death.

And now, to every one whose eye has passed over these pages, I would say, Resolve upon reformation by entire abstinence, before you close the book.

While the argument is clear, and the impression of it is fresh, and your judgment is convinced, and your conscience is awake, be persuaded, not almost, but altogether. The present moment may be the one which decides your destiny forever. As you decide now upon abstinence or continued indulgence, so may your character be, through time and through eternity. Resolve also, instantly, to exclude ardent spirits from your family, and put out of sight the memorials of past folly and danger. And if for medicinal purposes you retain ardent spirits in your house, let it be among other drugs, and labelled, "Touch not, taste not, handle not."

As you would regulate your conduct by the Gospel, and give up your last account with joy, weigh well the arguments for abandoning the traffic in ardent spirits, as unlawful in the sight of God. And "if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out." Talk not of loss and gain; for who can answer for the blood of souls? and "what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house, by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it. Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth

a city by iniquity! Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts, that the people shall labor in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?"

Let the discourses upon the causes and symptoms of intemperance be read aloud in your family, at least once a year, that the deceitful, dreadful evil may not fasten unperceived his iron gripe on yourself, or any of your household; and that, if one shall not perceive his danger, another may, and give the timely warning. Thousands, every year, may be kept back from destruction by the simple survey of the causes and symptoms of intemperance. And,

Finally, when you have secured your own household, let your benevolence extend to those around you. Become in your neighborhood, and throughout the whole extent of your intercourse and influence, a humble, affectionate, determined reformer. It is to little purpose that the causes, symptoms, evils, and remedy of intemperance, have been disclosed, if this little volume be left to work its obscure and dilatory way through the land; but if every one who approves of it will aid its circulation, it may find a place yet in every family, and save millions from temporal and eternal ruin.

I pant not for fame or posthumous immortality; but my heart's desire and prayer to God for my countrymen is, that they may be saved from intemperance, and that our beloved nation may continue free, and become great and good.

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